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# CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

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# CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES





# CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

A SERIES OF PRACTICAL EXERCISES FOR  
CAVALRY

BY  
COLONEL MONSENERGUE

TRANSLATED BY  
E. LOUIS SPIERS  
ELEVENTH HUSSARS

WITH  
AN INTRODUCTION  
BY  
BRIG.-GENERAL H. DE LA P. GOUGH, C.B., ETC.

AND A PREFACE  
BY  
F. BENNETT-GOLDNEY, F.S.A., M.P.

LONDON  
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1914

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“ While the day gives light  
Trim the lamp for night.”



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## TRANSLATOR'S DEDICATION

IN dedicating this volume to my brother officers it is my first duty to express my thanks to my friend, Colonel Monsenergue, for his personal courtesy in allowing me to translate the present work into English.

The initial success achieved by Colonel Monsenergue in his own country by the publication of his "*Exercises Pratiques de Cadres*," followed as it was by the wider appreciation with which it has been since welcomed abroad, has already necessitated a second and enlarged edition — "Paris : Nancy, 1913."

In sending my English version of this later publication to the Press I am fully conscious of many shortcomings ; but I have done my best to avoid inaccuracy, and if I ask for indulgence it is in the belief that I am really assured of it beforehand.

It has long been recognized by those familiar with both languages, that in the case of certain phrases, even a pure translation of the words themselves is often liable to misconstruction.

Wherever, therefore, a literal translation has



appeared either to obscure the intention, or to convey a wrong impression of the French significance, I have not hesitated to look for an appropriate substitute. If I have not always been successful in finding a happy equivalent, I can at least claim throughout to have endeavoured to present Colonel Monsenergue's vivid and expressive language, in its latest garb of English homespun, as a faithful representation both of the spirit and meaning of the original.

In addition to a series of notes, I have ventured, with Colonel Monsenergue's sanction, to add three short appendices of similar, but somewhat more ample, quotations from several world-famous leaders of different nationalities. Consisting for the most part of conclusions founded upon the actual experiences of war, they cannot cease, whatever the conflict of opinion, to interest the student of modern warfare.

Through the courtesy of my publishers, to whom I gladly acknowledge my indebtedness, I have been enabled to add two large maps of the areas within which the exercises take place.

In conclusion, I desire to thank my many friends for the assistance which they have given me whenever I have encroached upon their time.

More especially, with Colonel Monsenergue, I wish to express my sincere thanks to Brig.-General Gough, C.B., etc., for his extremely valuable Introduction.

Reflecting as it does the considered opinion of one of the recognized leaders of our British cavalry, it cannot fail to be regarded as something more than a mere acknowledgement of the soundness of the latest methods of French cavalry training.

Last, but not least, I take this, my only opportunity, to record my personal thanks to my friend, Mr. Francis Bennett-Goldney, M.P., who not only helped me materially with my first translation from the earliest French text, but who has since, and especially during my recent illness and enforced absence abroad, contrived to find time, amid much strenuous political work, not only to help me revise and re-revise my present text with the original French, but also to correct and re-correct my proofs.

E. LOUIS SPIERS,  
11th Hussars.

ALDERSHOT,

*January, 1914.*





## INTRODUCTION

LIEUTENANT SPIERS has done a great service to his brother officers in presenting a translation of the following tactical studies produced by Colonel Monsenergue.

It is gradually being borne in on our minds in the British Army that a mere absorption of our training manuals and other essays on tactics, excellent and incontestable as the principles contained in these may be, still leaves our officers very ill-equipped to deal with the many and varied situations which face them in war, or even at field days in peace.

When called upon to solve any tactical problem (whether theoretically on a map, or in reality with troops, matters very little) it is immediately found that it is the *application* of these principles, together with the effort of will always required to come to a definite decision, which creates the real difficulty, and not the mere capacity for remembering them like a parrot.

To arrive at some facility in, and at some sensible way of dealing with these situations, and in order

to exercise the capacity for decision, there is only one royal road. That road is the frequent working out, and criticism (in a passive as well as an active sense) of concrete tactical problems, by which an officer is constantly forced to arrive at a decision—*to do something*.

Nor is it sufficient that an officer should be able to deal rapidly, and in a sound manner, with tactical situations himself. He has also to instruct and prepare his subordinates equally with himself to meet these situations.

From both these points of view the following collection of tactical studies will be found of inestimable assistance to officers, and as the action of cavalry is primarily under discussion, it is to cavalry officers that this book will be found particularly valuable.

In studying these problems, officers themselves can learn much about the art of handling troops, and they will see there the practical application to definite concrete situations of many principles laid down in our own manuals.

But this collection of problems, with their criticisms and discussions, serves another purpose as well. Their study will assist officers of all grades not only to prepare similar problems for the benefit of their subordinates, but to arrive at the best way of conducting both instruction and criticism.

It will be noticed that the criticisms made on the various solutions are by no means synonymous with

blame, and that praise is dispensed with an equally lavish hand as censure, the good points being emphasized as strongly as the faulty. Moreover, what may be aptly termed the fostering care with which initiative, courage, and daring, even when it borders on rashness, is encouraged, is remarkable.

The words of Clausewitz are too often overlooked in our Army, while the narrow and pedantic application of some phrase or principle is substituted.

I trust I may be pardoned for once again quoting, although it is only from memory, this well-known passage : “ Happy is the army in which acts of rashness are of frequent occurrence. They are luxuriant plants which grow only on a fertile soil.”

The first, and by far the most important, duty of military instructors of all ranks is to inculcate into their subordinates the right *spirit*—namely, the fearlessness of responsibility, energy and activity, with a keen desire always to assume the offensive, and attack or counter-attack the enemy, rather than to submit passively to his action.

The capacity to produce sound tactical problems, and to criticize them instructively, demands the most serious study from officers from the day they join the Army. But, in General Bonnal’s words, “ war can only be learnt in peace by a long and severe study.”

When war breaks out, it can only be conducted with a firm resolve to conquer, and to sacrifice one’s



life, if necessary, to attain that end. It is this spirit which must animate not only the whole corps of officers, but it is their special duty to inspire their men with it also.

Such are the sacrifices which every country demands of her manhood and her soldiers if that country is to live.

Nor must it ever be forgotten that without the latter, "the foundation established on a rock," the former is a mere work of supererogation.

And cavalry officers must bear this particularly in mind, for it is, or it should be, the nature of their service to accept risks freely.

In this connection, the quotations from the late General de Négrier's writings may be read with interest. A word of serious warning is, however, here necessary, and readers must avoid the danger of taking some of his extreme views too literally.

The rifle is a weapon which cavalry should know how to use, and I may say that the British cavalry certainly do know how to use it, but it is not the weapon with which they must normally seek their decisions.

The decision can only be arrived at by closing with the enemy, and when cold steel comes into play.

There is always a risk in a cavalry attack, because it is difficult to say exactly what hostile force may be suddenly found opposed to it, and once launched there is no going back without disaster.

It is the duty, however, of cavalry officers in particular, and officers of other arms in general, when they are in command of mixed forces, to face these possible risks with their certain attendant losses.

If they do, the results, moral as well as material, will fully repay such action and such a spirit.

The problems contained in these pages will at least assist us in our preparation in peace.

Their value is greatly enhanced by the appendices and many quotations from our manuals and well-known authors, which the translator has been at such considerable pains to add.

H. DE LA POER GOUGH.

## PREFACE

WHEN Mr. Hugh Rees first asked me to add a Preface to the present volume, I was reminded perforce of an admonition I once received in early youth, while doing my best to extricate a friend from the pitfalls of sundry catch questions in a French examination, to the effect that I appeared never to lose an opportunity of exposing my own ignorance in two languages at once. I must admit that since I first began to help Mr. Spiers with his translation I have more than once been forced again to realize the truth of its application.

No French work is really easy to “turn into fluent English.” To translate a technical military work well is difficult, even for those who happen to possess the most thorough familiarity with both languages.

Colonel Monsenergue’s “*Exercises Pratiques de Cadres*,” written almost in colloquial French, is far from being an exception to the rule. From personal knowledge I am well aware of the time and infinite pains which have been devoted to the present translation, and I thoroughly concur with General Gough when he says that “Lieutenant Spiers has



done a great service to his brother officers" in making Colonel Monsenergue's work accessible to the English-speaking military world.

Happily, the more strictly technical side of Colonel Monsenergue's work has been already fully dealt with in General Gough's masterly and instructive Introduction, which I have been privileged to read.

As a non-professional soldier it is not for me here to criticize either strategy or tactics. If as a citizen and a taxpayer rather than a politician, I venture to touch upon administration and efficiency—as well as sufficiency—it is because I hold the view that these particular questions ought not to be left solely at the mercy of contending parties either at the Treasury or the War Office.

We have been told on unimpeachable authority that the individual training of our officers has never been more satisfactory. It is the maintenance of this high standard of efficiency that the country has now the right to demand. So far as this question is concerned, the problems confronting the French cavalry are similar to those which face our own. In this connection Colonel Monsenergue is certainly to be congratulated on the sincerity of the welcome extended by General Gough to the English version of the "*Exercises Pratiques de Cadres*," which in France has already won for itself the distinctive position of a standard military work.

That the system of training adopted by our

brothers on the further side of the Channel is regarded as an example for other cavalries to follow has been demonstrated by their imitations of it ; and if we may judge by their experience, these exercises should prove equally welcome to our own higher commands.

To the regimental officer, as well as to those whose constantly recurring duty it is to evolve fresh schemes and new situations, Colonel Monsenergue's book should come as an extremely useful addition to our military works of reference. None the less so, perhaps, if we are to accept the dictum of the distinguished German strategist, who has placed it upon record that the British officer is usually so tied up with red tape that he is as unimaginative in conception as he is mechanical in action.

Making due allowance, as Colonel Monsenergue has been careful to do throughout his "Exercises," for the difficulties which all cavalry in training has to contend against in a much enclosed country, virtually all the different problems dealt with are as applicable to our own few mounted regiments as they are to the far more numerous cavalry of France.\* And here I venture to touch upon one of the many sidelights thrown by Colonel Monsenergue upon the difference between the French practice and our own. In the following

\* British Regular establishment, including Household Cavalry, exclusive of India, 1913: Officers, 547; other ranks, 14,169 (Army Estimates, 1913-14).

schemes it is impossible not to be struck by the frequent and persistent recognition which our friends give to the use of the cyclist arm. Whatever the real excuse—whether prejudice or economy—the fact remains that our own policy appears to be precisely the reverse of the French ; and in many centres of so-called military activity our cavalry is only rarely given an opportunity of serious work with such erstwhile inferior beings as “mere Knights of the Wheel,” or those who are forced “to go upon their flat feet.”

It is only fair, however, to observe that a certain number of cyclists do put in an appearance during Manœuvres, when the countryside is occasionally startled by a machine-gun drawn by cyclists, or whirled away in a taxicab. But the Manœuvres once over, both cycle and rider often seem to vanish as mysteriously as they came, and for another year, so far as certain cavalry regiments are concerned, they appear to be virtually forgotten.

Attention has not infrequently been called to this apparent neglect of our Territorial cyclists. Would it not be possible,—if their fares were paid,—say, for the Metropolitan cyclists or a County corps to enjoy an occasional day with the cavalry at Aldershot or elsewhere ? Would it not be to their mutual advantage if our Regular cavalry regiments were occasionally to arrange a day to suit the Territorials ? Even our Regulations, however,



appear to adopt the plan that the less said about this particular arm the better.

The soundness of the doctrine that sections and troops of cavalry should co-operate with infantry during company and battalion training is again and again emphasized by Colonel Monsenergue. Unfortunately British cavalry regiments are frequently so much below strength in trained men, owing to the mischievous linked regiment system which denudes our squadrons for drafts abroad at the very moment the men are beginning to be really efficient, it has been generally found, where the system has been tried and sufficient units have been taken away to co-operate with the infantry, that there were too few trained men left in the squadrons to enable them to carry out any really useful work.

Insisting strongly on the vital necessity for unceasing vigilance in the training of all scouts and patrol leaders, Colonel Monsenergue is a warm advocate for the formation of a separate troop of highly trained scouts in each squadron. It is proposed that they should be responsible for distant reconnaissances as well as for other important duties requiring special skill, and it has been suggested that their place in the squadron might be in the rear rank, so that as a tactical unit the squadron would not be crippled by their absence. In this connection it is noteworthy that Captain Loir in his famous military work "*Cavalerie*"

holds a similar view, and it is generally recognized that if the reform were adopted the men would of necessity become keener and more efficient than our present squadron scouts.

In this country, unfortunately, under present conditions, the difficulties of adopting such a reform with our seriously dwindling numbers appear to be almost, if not quite, insuperable. It is impossible to take away more men from a squadron which often can only bring its first rank with the greatest difficulty up to anything like full strength by the inclusion of every procurable man, including the butcher, the baker, and the candlestick-maker.

Meanwhile it is noticeable that opportunities for the training of our own N.C.O's and men in scouting and patrol work tend rather to diminish than increase. It is equally obvious, unless more time can be given to this all-important work, that it is hopeless to expect, in Colonel Monsenergue's own words, "that in a good troop every section is a capable patrol and every unit a good vedette."

Here it may not be out of place to call attention to a simple suggestion which has recently been put into practice in a foreign cavalry regiment. It struck a young corporal, who as a civilian had been employed as signalman at a railway junction, that the time now occupied in sending out exercise parties of men and horses, unavoidable as it is throughout the year, might in future be utilized to some advantage if these parties were divided into

two bodies, the one being given an order to rejoin the other on the way home at a given point and time. It may be urged—Why trouble about anything so simple? But it would require calculations of time and distance, it would encourage a more general use of the map, and at least it would give some elementary practice in patrol leading.

It will not escape notice in the following exercises that the horses often appear to be spared less than they usually are in our own Commands. Leaders are constantly encouraged to avail themselves of the Gallop, and the Charge is of frequent occurrence. Possibly this may be one explanation why foreign Governments so eagerly purchase all our best horses, both in England and Ireland, over the head of our remount department. So long, however, as the German and other Governments willingly pay sixty guineas in our open markets, while our own agents are compelled to stop bidding at forty, we cannot expect to be as usefully mounted.

There can be no doubt that the armies of the Continent intend to make use of their cavalry freely in shock in battle, and it is universally recognized that if a cavalry is not imbued with the desire, as well as the resolution, to close with the enemy, then that cavalry is of very little value.

Had our own cavalry leaders at Poplar Grove not been affected by false doctrines and unsound deductions, this country would never have been shamed by the spectacle of a whole cavalry division .



failing to expose itself to any fire, standing miserably impotent before some twenty Boers.

Should our own small, but irreplaceable,\* Expeditionary Force ever be called upon to take part in a European war, we cannot afford to risk disaster. The very fewness of our total numbers† demands that every single unit shall receive the soundest and most ample training. The sacrifices which our officers and men will be called upon to make in war can only be diminished by substantial sacrifices in time of peace. These sacrifices are another reason (if more were needed) that all ranks should be adequately and fairly paid. Can we wonder we are short of officers when the richest nation in the world only pays a cavalry subaltern £139 a year, and makes him pay more than double for the privilege of the monopoly? But upon this question, bound up as it really is both with efficiency and the promotion of merit, it is unnecessary to dwell further here.

Among the copious notes, Mr. Spiers has included several quotations from the late General de Négrier. After the Russo-Japanese War his

\* "On the departure of the Expeditionary Force there will be left in Great Britain only three regiments of cavalry and five battalions of infantry of the Regular Army" (Duke of Bedford in the *Nineteenth Century*, June, 1913, quoting "Army Estimates, 1912-13," and "War Establishments, 1913").

† The number of men of the Regular Army serving with the colours has been reduced by 37,000 men since 1905 (Official Report, House of Lords, February 20, 1912, p. 131).

pronounced views with regard to dismounted action and rifle fire led at one time to a considerable conflict of opinion. With regard, however, to the main functions of cavalry there should be no dispute. And if I quote another authority of distinction, it is as a British endorsement of the Continental view, which is as freely recognized by the Imperial Staff upon the Spree as by that upon the Seine : “ The use of fire—*i.e.*, of the rifle—has only one object in tactics, or rather ought to have only one—to enable our troops to advance and close with the enemy.” This applies equally to cavalry and infantry. “ If the foot-soldier in masses can run and use the bayonet, the mounted man can gallop and use his sword or lance.”

Infantry is still exposed to risks as great, if not greater than any in the past. With their bayonets they are able still to be successful. If only their brothers in the cavalry will stand up to their losses, as they did of old, they, too, will assuredly achieve similar success. If any infantry leaders still hold the opinion (and certainly none do either in France or Germany) that after hours, and possibly days, of fighting, exhausted both in body and nerve, having already suffered heavy loss, and still menaced if they expose themselves to a storm of fire, that they are in no danger from a cavalry attack, they are falling into an insidious and most dangerous error.

In the proximity of the enemy all ground is

assumed by the French Army to be held by the enemy, and manœuvred accordingly, the necessity for manœuvre being thoroughly instilled into the minds of all ranks from the earliest training. Above everything, the young French cavalryman is not merely permitted, but strongly encouraged, to think for himself, and, what is equally important, to think quickly; while from first to last he is taught to maintain the most uncompromising offensive.

Mr. Spiers has shown us a faithful picture of a French cavalry regiment in the making.

Embodying as it does the soundest methods of modern cavalry training grafted upon the noblest traditions of the most warlike nation in the world, Colonel Monsenergue's "*Exercises Pratiques de Cadres*" is itself its own recommendation.

If there is one thing more than another to be learned from it, it is to be found in the words of the old Cromwellian adage, that "Good leading makes good following."

FRANCIS BENNETT-GOLDNEY.





## ERRATA

- ✓ Page 18, line 5, *for* "of the enemy" *read* "of cavalry."
- ✓ Page 32, line 18, *for* "550" *read* "50."
- ✓ Page 36, line 7, *for* "collectively" *read* "individually."
- ✓ Page 44, line 8, *after* "sections" *insert* "for dismounted action."
- ✓ Page 46, line 20, *for* "right" *read* "left."
- ✓ Page 46, line 21, *for* "left" *read* "right."
- ✓ Page 49, line 19, *delete* "(1)."
- ✓ Page 49, line 23, at end of line *add* "—The Director."  
Page 49, *delete* lines 24 and 25.
- ✓ Page 50, line 14, *after* "along the" *insert* "right."
- ✓ Page 58, line 3 of footnote, *for* "Kelser's" *read* "Keller's."
- ✓ Page 59, line 3 of footnote, *for* "Letter" *read* "Letters."
- ✓ Page 64, line 5, *for* "northern" *read* "southern."
- ✓ Page 65, line 15, *for* "southern" *read* "northern."
- ✓ Page 74, line 11, *delete* "the" *before* "hostages."
- ✓ Page 75, line 2, *for* "road" *read* "woods."
- ✓ Page 75, line 11, *after* "February" *insert* "14."
- ✓ Page 80, line 20, *for* "Saint Quentin road" *read* "Saint Quentin pond."
- ✓ Page 92, line 4, *after* "right" *insert* "of the artillery."
- ✓ Page 97, line 4, *for* "down" *read* "off."
- ✓ Page 97, line 18, *for* "Go the" *read* "Go by the."
- ✓ Page 101, line 23, *for* "south" *read* "north."
- ✓ Page 102, line 27, *for* "p.m." *read* "a.m."
- ✓ Page 103, line 4, *for* "p.m." *read* "a.m."

## CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

- ✓ Page 105, line 1, *for* "four" *read* "three."
- ✓ Page 105, line 2, *for* "a" *read* "the."
- ✓ Page 105, line 8 of footnote, *for* "Pima" *read* "Pirna."
- ✓ Page 117, line 9, *after* "protection" *insert* "on the flanks."
- ✓ Page 118, line 21, *for* "cross-roads at" *read* "crossing of the road from."
- ✓ Page 120, line 6, *for* "of" *read* "on."
- ✓ Page 131, line 18, *for* "on the left" *read* "along the right."
- ✓ Page 147, line 1 of footnote, *for* "1790" *read* "1800."
- ✓ Page 147, line 6 of footnote, *for* "debauch" *read* "debouch."
- ✓ Page 148, line 4 of footnote, *after* "Marengo" *add* "—Col. Monsenergue."
- ✓ Page 153, line 7, *for* "270" *read* "330."
- ✓ Page 156, line 12, *for* "Fenen" *read* "Feneu."
- ✓ Page 159, line 14, *for* "of" *read* "over the."
- ✓ Page 160, line 2, *after* "at" *insert* "the."
- ✓ Page 162, at the end of list of equipment *add* "one ration cart drawn by two horses."
- ✓ Page 163, line 6, *for* "at" *read* "over the."
- ✓ Page 166, line 20, *to read* "the River Bar.—The third troop, south of the road, is."
- ✓ Page 167, line 18, *for* "Angereau's" *read* "Augereau's."
- ✓ Page 167, line 20, *for* "Roneo" *read* "Ronco."
- ✓ Page 178, line 28, *for* "Tafna" *read* "La Tafna."
- ✓ Page 178, line 29, *for* "Brière" *read* "Brières."
- ✓ Page 200, line 5, *for* "the" *read* "one."
- ✓ Page 200, line 6, *for* "squadrons" *read* "squadron."
- ✓ Page 201, line 9 of footnote, *for* "Van" *read* "Von."
- ✓ Page 210, line 7, *after* "squadron" *insert* "at Remilly."
- ✓ Page 219, line 28, *for* "its" *read* "his."
- ✓ Page 223, line 7 of footnote, *for* "Yrou" *read* "Yron."
- ✓ Page 226, line 21, *for* "Rubécourt-la-Ferronerie" *read* "Rubécourt—La Ferronnerie."
- ✓ Page 227, line 22, *for* "Lyanerie" *read* "Lyannerie."

## ERRATA

- ✓ Page 228, line 12, *for* "Martinerie" *read* "Ferronnerie."
- ✓ Page 229, line 4, *for* "Martinerie" *read* "Ferronnerie."
- ✓ Page 242, line 20, *for* "to mount and make for Olly" *read*  
" , then have mounted and made for Olly."
- ✓ Page 247, line 12, *for* "Executions" *read* "Execution."
- ✓ Page 257, line 8, *for* "west" *read* "crest."
- ✓ Page 257, line 11, *transpose* "right" and "left."
- ✓ Page 266, lines 2 and 17, *for* "Harancourt" *read* "Haraucourt."
- Page 266, lines 24 and 25, *transfer* quotation mark from  
"convoy" *to before* "Ascertain."
- Page 267, line 10, *for* "Harancourt" *read* "Haraucourt."
- Page 275, line 2 of footnote, *for* "Trantenau" *read* "Trautenau."
- Page 278, sketch, *for* "Sapagne" *read* "Sapogne."
- Page 284, line 4, *for* "Wadel" *read* "Wedel."
- Page 290, lines 5 and 6, *for* "A company, not visible, is  
coming," *read* "A cyclist company is in sight coming."
- Page 290, line 13, *for* "company which is still invisible"  
*read* "cyclist company."
- Page 295, line 2, *for* "Huttersdorf" *read* "Hüttendorf."
- Page 295, lines 9 and 17, *for* "Sarre" *read* "Saar."
- Page 297, line 18, *for* "Lanterbach" *read* "Lauterbach."
- Page 297, line 27, *for* "Boucheporn" *read* "Buschborn."
- Page 298, lines 11 and 18, *for* "Boucheporn" *read* "Buschborn."
- Page 299, lines 11 and 29, *for* "Creutzwold" *read* "Kreutzwald."
- Page 299, lines 21 and 22, *for* "Sarrebruck" *read* "Saarbrücken."
- Page 301, line 3, *for* "Boucheporn" *read* "Buschborn."
- Page 305, lines 6 and 12, *for* "Clayes" *read* "Cloyes."
- Page 308, lines 5, 7, and 10, *for* "Clayes" *read* "Cloyes."
- Page 310, line 10, *for* "Bouie" *read* "Bonie."



## CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

- ✓ Page 310, line 12, *for* "Königsgratz" *read* "Königgrätz."
- ✓ Page 310, line 32, *for* "Arenbschild" *read* "Arentschildt."
- ✓ Page 311, line 18, *for* "Auersvald" *read* "Auerswald."
- ✓ Page 311, line 13 of footnote, *for* "Zeithen" *read* "Ziethen."
- ✓ Page 314, line 4, *for* "Piedan's" *read* "Pieton's."
- ✓ Page 314, line 30, *for* "Alvensteben" *read* "Alvensleben."
- ✓ Page 316, line 4, *for* "Trouville" *read* "Tronville."
- ✓ Page 319, line 4, *for* "Alvensteben" *read* "Alvensleben."
- ✓ Page 323, lines 6 and 11, *for* "Fitz-Hoenig" *read* "Fritz Hoenig."
- ✓ Page 326, line 7, *for* "Bonal" *read* "Bonie."
- ✓ Page 326, lines 22 and 32, *for* "Ranch" *read* "Rauch."
- ✓ Page 332, line 2, *for* "Fauligny" *read* "Fouligny."
- ✓ Page 333, line 17, *for* "Foligny" *read* "Fouligny."
- ✓ Page 335, lines 19, 23, and 26, *for* "Fauligny" *read* "Fouligny."
- ✓ Page 336, lines 1 and 27, *for* "Fauligny" *read* "Fouligny."
- ✓ Page 336, lines 20 and 22, *for* "Vandoncourt" *read* "Vaudoncourt."
- ✓ Page 340, footnote, *transpose* "five" and "eight."

# CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

## INTRODUCTION

### INSTRUCTION OF OFFICERS

#### 1. METHOD ; SCHEMES FOR EXERCISES AND REPORTS.

THE method for the practical instruction of our Officers and N.C.O's is founded upon the principle that all ranks shall receive their teaching from their immediate superiors in the hierarchical system of the Army.—Thus an N.C.O. commanding a section will be trained by the Troop Officer supervising the work of the section concerned.—

The Troop Leaders are taught by their Squadron Officers, and, under their instruction, carry out troop exercises. The Captains are employed in squadron training under the directions of the Majors ; and in sequence the Lieut.-Colonel and Colonel control the work of the “ half regiments,” in addition to that of the regiment itself.\*

\* “ All commanders, from Troop Leaders to General Officers, are responsible for the training of their commands.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 13.

## 2 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

This system, laid down by the Regulations, is carried out without reference to the intensive training of the men, which goes on without interruption both in quarters and on parade.—It is justified on the ground that cross-country work is very rarely possible for large bodies of troops. Again, the majority of false impressions created by a constant recurrence of grossly improbable situations are by these means avoided.

This method, already practised in many of our regiments, seems likely to be adopted by all, and in view of the law of two years' service,\* it is more than ever incumbent upon us to give it our special consideration.

To attain the highest results, the uninteresting and the commonplace must be eliminated.—The very best intention and the happiest initiative will quickly evaporate where a spirit of indifference is permitted to predominate.

Duties in the field, taught by this method of practical training under the next in command, require very careful watching.—In order, therefore, not to be tempted into impossible situations or misleading solutions it is evident there must be supervision.—To guard against the boredom and discouragement inseparable from certain problems and schemes which must sometimes tend to become monotonous and even uncongenial, unceasing stimulus is equally essential.—Further, if

\* Now about to be changed to three.

permanent benefit is to be derived from the work, unity both of method and of doctrine is imperative.

To attain this much-to-be-desired consummation—

1. The scheme of the exercise to be carried out is prepared beforehand by the Directing Officer, who will give it out to the leaders before the Rendezvous.

2. A Report on the exercise is afterwards written out by the officer in command of the party which carried it out.—He will quote the criticisms of the Directing Officer, and the report will then be initialed by the senior officers, who will express their own views.—Finally, it will be handed to the Officer Commanding, who, after looking through it, will annotate and return it through the same channels to the officer directing the exercise.

It may be we shall be met with the old complaint,—“More papers!—We are inundated with papers!”—But studies, such as these, have no connection at all with the conventional reports with which we are so frequently all but submerged.

The complete Report of a scheme in the field containing the personal impressions of the responsible Director, supplemented by the observations of his superior officers, becomes of necessity a record of an extremely suggestive character.—The production of a scheme in writing, fully annotated by the different leaders, cannot fail both to encour-



## 4 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

age clear thinking, and to inculcate that spirit of thoroughness which is as helpful to the promotion of the general weal as it is stimulating to individual effort.

Criticism, revised under the sympathetic watchfulness of the senior officers, must of necessity dispel misconception, and, to the lasting advantage of the army, establish a sound principle of training.

Finally, the reports of such schemes, no less than the schemes themselves, are of particular value to the higher Command in forming an appreciation of the capacity of subordinate leaders.

### 2. REGULATIONS FOR EXERCISES.

Officers and N.C.O's carrying out the exercise will assemble on the ground where it is actually to begin.—The Director will explain the nature and special object of the scheme, making sure that all concerned thoroughly understand the Regulations laid down in the official handbooks dealing with the problem in question.—He will submit a very simple general idea, and will clearly define the initial tactical situation.

The order will then be given to carry out the particular enterprise.—The officer told off to take command will, in turn, explain his intentions and plans.—He will issue his orders, personally direct the operations, and continue to do so till he is in contact with the enemy and the fighting begins.

While the various movements are taking place, any errors of disposition should be revealed by the creation of such incidents as will cause the opposing force to appear in the manner best calculated to expose the mistake.—This is the most instructive method of practical teaching so far as the precise application of the Regulations to the ground is concerned.—Incidents relative to the normal presence of the enemy in the tactical situation require both judgment and decision, qualities which it is essential to develop in the responsible leader.—In addition, the Director will endeavour to create such situations as will necessitate solutions illustrating the particular principles which he is most anxious to emphasize.

At the conclusion of the exercise the Director will sum up and criticize the work which has been carried out ; he will also recall particular incidents, and explain what he considers in the circumstances should have been done.

On his return to barracks the officer in charge will write out his Report, add a simple sketch, and forward it as before indicated.

### 3. CHARACTER OF THE EXERCISES.

The offensive spirit is very clearly laid down and emphasized in the French Cavalry Regulations. Even patrols and reconnoitring bodies are at all times prepared to fight, not merely because it is a

## 6 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

proof of valour, but because it is often the only means of carrying out their particular duties.—It is all the more essential, therefore, to be careful not to prejudice the prevailing belief in the soundness of this general principle by problems based on an assumption of wisdom likely to promote discussion as to whether fighting is the best solution or not.

1. A judicious Director will endeavour, before all things, to create situations calling for such clearly offensive solutions as are best calculated to foster the true cavalry spirit.

These schemes can, and should, embrace the widest range.—Impressions acquired in youth are not only the most enduring but the most fruitful. A generation of leaders may be created by the practice of exercises such as these.

Without manœuvring the offensive is unattainable. The offensive limited to marching upon an enemy in a conventional formation, admittedly, may be a movement not to be despised, especially for cavalry, but the carefully thought out plan of an operation in war undoubtedly calls for something more.—The success of an army in the field depends upon the genius of the leader who can and will manœuvre. —The art of manœuvring does not consist merely in arriving somewhere haphazard upon the enemy's front, or in waiting till then to begin to make dispositions.—To act thus must necessarily involve a confinement to tactics of a defensive character.—To manœuvre is to co-

ordinate movements, the perfect convergence of which applies so much pressure in unexpected places that the enemy is compelled to give way.—This may be called purely offensive strategy.—Bonaparte, in his younger days, spent many a weary night poring over maps, trying to discover points, lines, and ground, the possession of which might place his adversary at a disadvantage.—Not content with this he would afterwards devote all his energies to working out and maturing plans calculated to deceive the enemy as to his real intentions,—searching for routes and devising dispositions favourable to manœuvre, an art in which he revealed himself a supreme master.

The chief command of an army in the field is already sufficiently complex.—All the preparation and detail appertaining to training, organization, administration, grouping, supply, mobilization, concentration, orders of movement, passage of initial points, etc., unquestionably important as they are, are matters only to be solved in times of peace.\* Thoroughly carried out, they assist to mature the

\* The French Minister of War, who said and believed that he was absolutely prepared, found that he was compelled, in fact, almost to improvise a fighting army in the face of an enemy advancing in perfect and compact order, with the measured and irresistible force of a tidal wave. . . . The German army, on the other hand, rested upon solid foundations.—The work of mobilization was conducted in strict accordance with business methods. Allowing for the constant presence of a certain amount of error, inseparable from human actions, it may be said that “nothing was left to chance.”—HOOPER: *Sedan*.



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troops for war. A wise General, when he knows these things are ready, will rely upon the intelligence of the responsible departments for their efficient maintenance.—Doubtless, from time to time, he will assume control and issue directions, but, unfettered as he should be from these innumerable preoccupations, he will be free to devote himself, unhampered, to the study of the actual operations of war. This once established, it is clear that the principles guiding the direction of an army in the field are identical to those which should apply even to the humblest unit.

2. To create a generation of capable leaders it is necessary to develop from the very earliest training not merely a taste, but an aptitude, for manœuvre.

# TRAINING OF LEADERS

## EXERCISES AND REPORTS

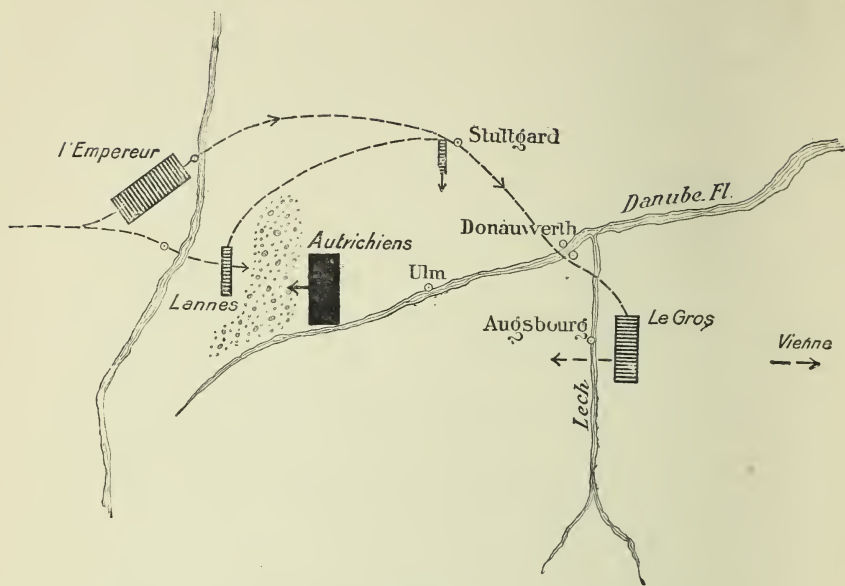
### CHAPTER I

#### TROOP SCHEMES

##### OFFENSIVE MANŒUVRE.

*Campaign of 1805.*—The manœuvre at Augsburg.

The French Army is marching along the valley of the Danube:—its objective, Vienna.—On his march, it is the intention of the Emperor, as soon as he comes in contact with the enemy, to immediately envelop him.—The Austrian Army, concentrated on the banks of the Upper Danube, appears to adhere to the intention of defending the approaches to the Black Forest.—Orders, therefore. —To Marshal Lannes :—“ Retain the enemy within the Forest.”—To the Main Army:—“ Direction Stuttgart—Donauwerth, passage of the Danube and occupation of the Lech towards Augsburg and the Austrian rear.”—The Austrians surprised by the presence of the French on their line of operations fall back and capitulate at Ulm.



MAP 1.

## No. 1.

### TROOP SCHEME.

*The Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Leaders.

*Rendezvous* (December 5, 1 p.m.).—Northern exit from Sedan at the Shattered Oak (Chêne-Brisé).

### PROBLEM A.

*General Idea.*—Half a regiment (two squadrons) covers the movement of an infantry brigade carrying out an offensive reconnaissance from Sedan towards Mézières.—Route: The road to Mézières

— Vrigne-aux-Bois — Vivier-au-Court — Ville-sur-Lumes.

Parties of the enemy's cavalry have been seen towards Ville-sur-Lumes and Cons-la-Grandville.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The half regiment is at the northern exit from Sedan on the road to Gaulier.—Orders by O.C. half regiment.

*Distant Protection*.—Corporal Z with patrol of four men.—(Imaginary.)

*Immediate Protection*.—First squadron, forward to the right and left; second squadron in rear, to the right and left.—One troop in advanced guard—“Order of the Squadron leader of the first squadron. Lieut. A with his troop in advanced guard.”—THE DIRECTOR.

## *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme*.—Lieut. A.

*Execution* (1 p.m.).—I move off at the trot with the whole of my troop.—At the further extremity of Floing I give the order to Corporal A and four men :—“Advance upon Saint Menges, pass through it, and rejoin at Saint Albert.”—Three hundred yards from Saint Albert I give the order to walk.—Order to Sergeant X and six men :—“In advanced guard !” I move with the advanced guard.—The troop follows in charge of Sergeant Y.

*First Bound*.—To the defile of La Falizette at the Briquetterie.

*First Incident* (1.25 p.m.).—The two men in



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point reach the western end of the defile ;—I am 220 yards from it.—A body of thirty of the enemy's cavalry come up at the trot from Vrigne. The point takes cover.—I send word to my troop which has lost touch and is no longer in sight. Five minutes later it arrives at the gallop.—The enemy has had time to dismount and draw a waggon across the road.—I send back information, and am reinforced.—The enemy finally retreats, etc.

The march resumed.

*Second Bound.*—To the outskirts of Vrigne-aux-Bois.

I march with the point.—The troop follows, and remains in sight.—The point searches the village.

*Second Incident* (1.50 p.m.).—I am with my troop at the cemetery.—A troop of the enemy, dismounted, holds the bridge over the Vrigne on the road to Vivier-au-Court.—None of the enemy are in the northern quarter of the village.—Order to the troop: “Dismounted action!”—It is my intention to attack in front and in flank.—Order, therefore, to the first and second sections:—“Frontal attack ;—objective : the barricade.”—To the third section (Corporal X) :—“Move by the north of the village ; flank attack.—Objective : the enemy, on his left.”

The enemy's resistance is prolonged.—The half regiment comes up and is obliged to assist, etc.\*

\* “This is often the case.—The scouts open fire ;—the point comes up and does the same ; the vanguard soon arrives, and

*Criticism* (1).—You (Lieut. A) trotted off at once, and thus gave yourself plenty of elbow room. Quite right.—Near Saint Albert you ordered your troop to walk, and, with your advanced guard, you made for the head of the defile.—At that moment a troop of the enemy appeared ; your own was not within reach.—You threw away the advantage of the surprise ; the main body had to reinforce you, and was delayed.—It was impossible to turn the defile. You should have made for its head as quickly as possible with the whole of your troop.

(2).—Towards Vrigne you moved on ahead of your troop.—There might have been dispositions to take : you were right.—You attacked the enemy dismounted, and manœuvred in a similar manner. This took too long.—You should have held him in his position in front with a section, dismounted, and manœuvred with your main body, mounted.—You would probably have captured him, and you would not have delayed your half regiment. — THE DIRECTOR.

*Senior Officer's Criticism (to the Director)*.—You created incidents which assume either that there was no reconnoitring patrol, or that it had not been successful in its mission.—As Instructor, this is, of course, your privilege.—In this connection, how-

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then the main body of the advanced guard.—All join in the struggle.—In this manner an Action may be precipitated by the irresponsible impulse of a single corporal and a couple of men.”—*Manuel de Guerre*.

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ever, I wish to point out that a reconnoitring patrol should also advance by successive bounds,\* and only move just far enough ahead of the half regiment to enable it to assume a fighting formation (which is quickly done)—or to change direction.—The occupation of the bridge over the Vrigne by a hostile troop should have been notified, more properly, by a reconnoitring patrol.—THE MAJOR.

### SCHEME A (*continued*).

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. B.

*Special Situation* (2 p.m.).—The troop, in advanced guard, is at the exit from Vrigne-aux-Bois. The column moves into the village. March resumed.

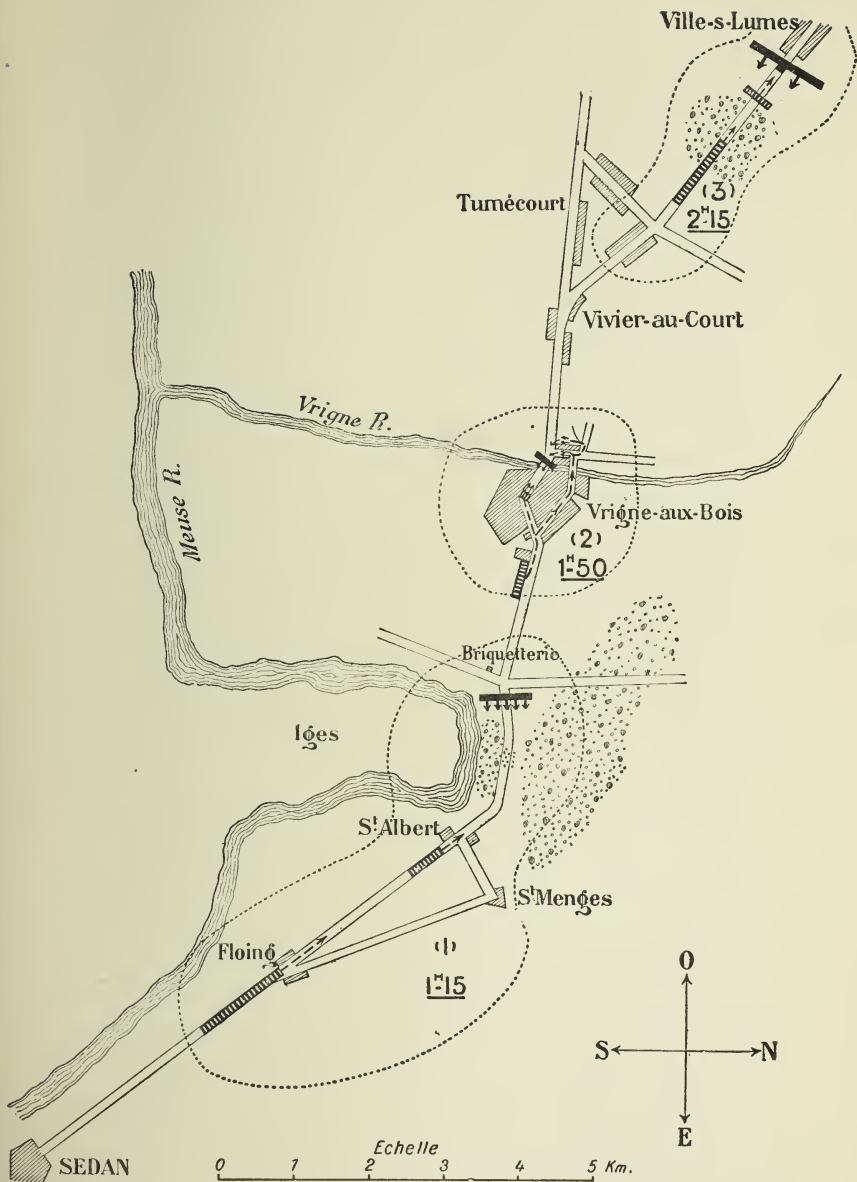
*Execution.*—March of the troop in advanced guard.

*First Bound.*—Western exit from Tumécourt. Reconnaissance and rapid march through Vivier-au-Court and Tumécourt.

*Second Bound.*—North-west exit from the wood of Tumécourt.—Order to Sergeant X and six men:—"In advanced guard!"—I move with the advanced guard.—The troop follows.

*Third Incident* (2.15 p.m.).—I am with the advanced guard.—We enter the wood.—A patrol of two scouts to the right.—The troop follows some 550 yards in rear.—A despatch rider from

\* "Patrols, like all other bodies of mounted troops, should move in bounds, covering the distance between good positions rapidly."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 258.



MAP 2



## 16 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

the reconnoitring patrol gallops towards us.—He reports a squadron of the enemy advancing from Mézières along the Ville-sur-Lumes Road in column of fours at the walk.—I send back the information to the O.C. half regiment.—He is riding with my troop, and sends for me.—I ride back—my scouts move forward.—Order of the O.C. half regiment : It is my intention to cross the defile, so as to be ready to fight.—“Move swiftly to the north-west boundary of the wood, and secure the exits.”—I gallop off with the whole of my troop.—On arriving at the edge of the wood, I catch sight of the enemy's column leaving Ville-sur-Lumes.—I charge straight ahead.—The whole of the enemy's squadron deploys.—I order a wheel to the right, and move off towards the south-east, pursued by some mounted men in open order.—The squadron charges my half regiment, the head of which is just emerging from the wood.—LIEUT. B.

*Criticism.*—An advanced guard should always be ready to fight.—When in touch with the enemy dispositions must be taken, and the advanced guard thus becomes the first tactical group upon which the main body regulates its movements.—You should have been at the head of your troop ; the C.O. had to send for you—hence perilous delay.

On reaching the skirts of the wood, you saw one of the enemy's squadrons on the road in column of fours.—You charged, and were right in doing so. Eight times out of ten you would have been

successful. In this case, however, you had to conceal the approach of your half regiment from the enemy, as you were unable to defend it by dismounted action.—You should have made a demonstration in extended order.

*Senior Officer's Criticisms.*—Initialed, The Major.

As regards the position of the Leader.—It is laid down by the Regulations that the advanced point, as a general rule, will be led by an Officer. This Officer may be the Troop Leader of the leading troop of the advanced guard.—It cannot be the Officer commanding the advanced guard,—the latter is a tactical group, and consequently under the control of its own Officer.—It moves in successive bounds, and the movement of the main body is regulated by it.—Incidents 1 and 3 appear to have emphasized this.—LIEUT.-COLONEL X.

## No. 2.

*Troop Scheme.*—The neighbourhood of Saint Cyr.

*Advanced Guard.*—Position of Leader (continued).

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—Troop Leaders and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (December 12, 1 p.m.).—Les Gâtines.

## PROBLEM B.

*General Idea.*—Half a regiment advancing from the west is reconnoitring from Les Gâtines towards Saint Cyr.

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*Route.*—Les Gâtines—Bois d'Arcy—Saint Cyr.

*Distant Protection.*—Assured.

*Immediate Protection*—(forward).—A troop in advanced guard.

*Enemy.*—Strong parties of <sup>cavalry</sup> ~~the enemy~~ are reported in the neighbourhood of Versailles.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The column is nearing Les Gâtines.—Lieut. B with the troop in advanced guard has searched the village and is at its eastern exit.—He resumes his march upon Bois d'Arcy.—  
THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. B.

*Advanced Guard.*—Position of Leader (continued).

*Execution* (1.5 p.m.).—The troop is assembled at the eastern exit from the village of Les Gâtines. Order to Sergeant X and six men :—"In Advanced Guard!"—I move off with the advanced guard at the trot.—The troop under Sergeant Y follows.

*First Bound.*—To the crest G.

*First Incident* (1.10 p.m.). I have reached the crest G and remain there with the advanced guard.—The troop is 650 yards away, but still in sight as the ground is open.—A patrol of ten of the enemy's cavalry appears on the fringe of the wood to my left, drives back my two scouts, and charges me.—I fall back speedily across country towards my right rear.—At the same time two

of the enemy's squadrons put in an appearance in front, on the left flank of my half regiment, which delivers a frontal attack, while my troop, led by Sergeant Y, takes them in flank.—LIEUT. B.

*Criticism* (1).—Always the same mistake ; you are in command of the advanced guard and not of the advanced point ! You advanced with the point, and were useless.—Happily your troop extricated itself, but no thanks to you.—It is imperative to move at the head of your troop by successive bounds. The main body is obliged to regulate its movements by yours.—This must be remembered.—THE DIRECTOR.

### PROBLEM B (*continued*).

*Troop Exercise*.—Lieut. C.

*Advanced Guard*.—Traversing a wood and the occupation of its exits.

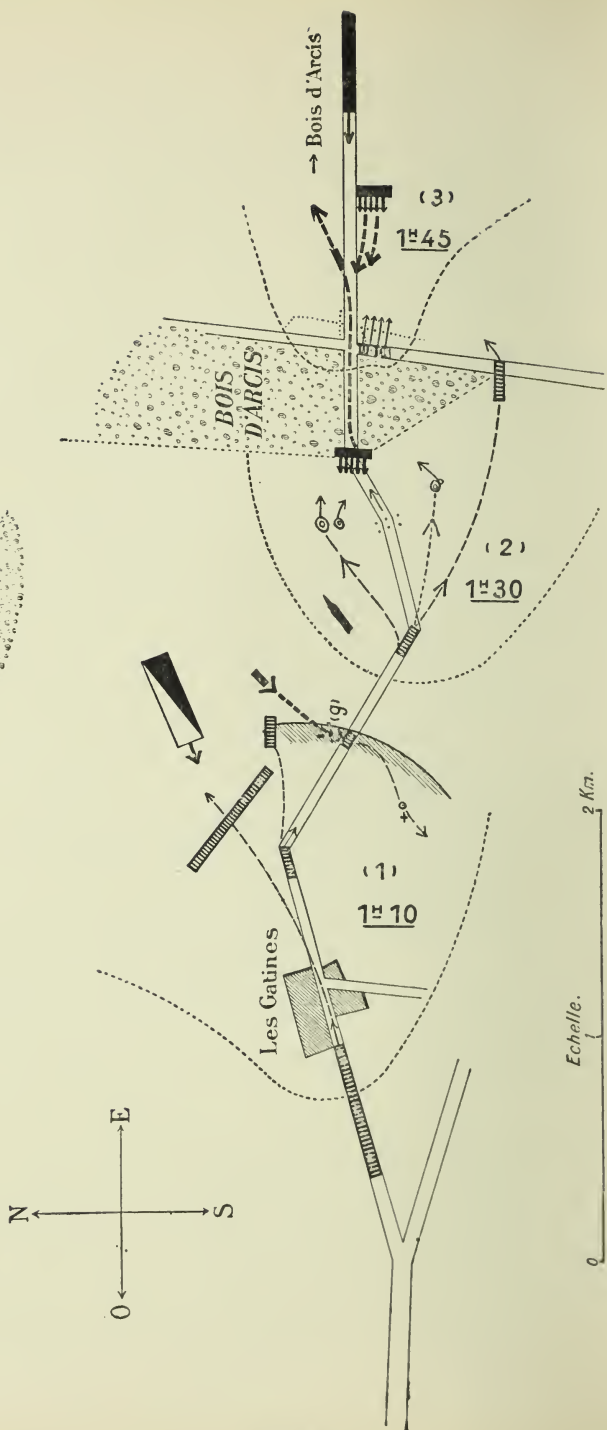
*Special Situation* (1.20 p.m.).—The half regiment is moving out of Les Gâtines.—The troop in advanced guard—Lieut. C—is at the crest G.—The march resumed.

*Execution*.—Order to the troop : “ Follow me ; trot.”

*First Bound*.—To within about 500 yards of the d'Arcy wood.—We halt behind a straw-stack. Order to Sergeant X and six men : “ Search the wood.”

*Second Incident* (1.30 p.m.).—The scouts gallop





MAP 3.

towards the wood.—Shots are fired from behind the trees.—I gallop off in open order to my right, as I am of course visible.—I reach the outskirts of the wood, and turn it.—As I approach the further side I see a troop of the enemy retiring rapidly by the road, and making for Bois d'Arcy.—Sergeant X and a few men follow it up along the road, etc.—I make for the eastern fringe of the wood by the road.

*Third Incident* (1.45 p.m.).—The half regiment is about to enter the wood ; I am on the further side. Three of the enemy's squadrons appear at the trot from Bois d'Arcy ; they are about 900 yards away. I send back word.—Order to the troop :—"Dismounted action."—Two of the enemy's troops dismount and open fire.—The half regiment emerges from the wood and suffers casualties.—It follows the road to the left along the belt.—There is a wire fence which is quickly cut by the pioneers, etc.—LIEUT. C.

*Criticism* (2).—You moved up in the open on the enemy's flank ; they made off,—excellent—but you might have captured them. To do this you should have held them to their position by the fire of one of your sections from the stack, turned them, and then, with your remaining sections mounted, fallen upon them from the rear.—To succeed, the movement of these sections should, if possible, have been concealed.

*Criticism* (3).—First, you brought on an action dismounted in the very line in which your half

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regiment was bound to emerge, and it received the fire you were really drawing upon it.—This was a blunder; you should have ridden well clear of the wood.—Secondly, you should have cut the wire fence on the main road on the far side from that on which you were fighting, and sent information of your action to your C.O. as quickly as possible.\*—THE DIRECTOR.

The Director created incidents calling for decision and judgment on the part of the Leader.—For this purpose, he assumed that the Commander of the advanced guard would act upon his own initiative.† It was within his right, and it was his duty.—It must not be forgotten, however, that the position of the C.O. is with his advanced guard, and that in many cases he will have to intervene to regulate the movements of his troop.

In the third incident, having come up to the advanced guard on the fringe of the wood, the

\* “In combining fire with mounted action the chief factors of success are :

- (1) That the two attacks are correctly timed.
- (2) That the two attacks do not interfere with each other.”

*Cavalry Training*, p. 269.

† That the victory was not more complete must be ascribed to the improvised character of the conflict. Both Woerth and Spicheren were accidental combats due to the initiative of subordinate officers, a practice which has its dangers. The success attained, however, in each of these cases, is a striking proof that the discipline and training of all ranks in the German army had created a living organism to be trusted even to work by itself.—HOOPER : *Sedan*.

C.O. should have ordered : “ I am coming out and shall deploy to the left. Cut the wires in that direction and take up a position to the right for dismounted action.”

The Director preferred, however, to allow the Leader to act upon his own initiative.—For purposes of instruction this was perfectly right.—  
THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

No. 3.

*Troop Scheme.*—Dismounted action.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—Troop Leaders and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (December 19, 1 p.m.).—Guyancourt.

PROBLEM C.

*General Situation.*—Paris besieged, 1870.

Half a regiment (two squadrons) is moving from Versailles towards the vale of Chevreuse to carry out requisitions.

*Route.*—Guyancourt—Voisins—Buloyer—Milon—Chevreuse.

*Distant Protection.*—Assured.

*Immediate Protection* (forward).—A troop in advanced guard.

*Enemy.*—Bodies of Cavalry and Infantry are reported in the region of Rambouillet.

*Special Situation* (1 p.m.).—The half regiment is nearing Guyancourt, which has just been traversed by the troop in advanced guard—(Lieut. D).



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This troop is assembled at the southern extremity of Guyancourt on the Voisins-le-Bretonneux road. The march resumed.—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Scheme.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. D.

*Advanced Guard.*—Protection when halted.

*Execution.*—Order to the troop: “Advance by sections ;—trot !”

*First Bound.*—To point 154.—We halt, concealed by a straw-stack.—I receive the following order: “The half regiment will halt for half an hour at the southern exit from Guyancourt.”—(Distant protection ; Assured.)—Orders, to Sergeant X and eight men: “Take up a line of protection.”—To Sergeant Y and four men.—Forward towards Voisins and beyond:—“Two scouts to the right towards Troux and Montigny.—Two scouts to the left towards Villaroy !”—To the troop: “Dismount, remain by your horses’ heads.—Let a look-out man climb a tree and watch the uplands.”

*First Incident* (1.30 p.m.).—The patrols out towards Voisins and Villaroy are no longer in sight. The scouts towards Montigny are some 550 yards away.

The troop, dismounted, is at the side of the road concealed by the stack.—The look-out man up the tree calls out that a large body of hostile cavalry is moving upon Guyancourt at the trot.—They are 650 yards away.—I send back word to the half

regiment which has only just time to mount. Order to the troop: "Dismounted action!\*"—At the enemy at 650 yards, six rounds, fire!"—A troop of the enemy leaves the main body and attacks me in extended order.—My led horses are dispersed.—  
LIEUT. D.

*Criticism* (1).—During a halt in open country the advanced guard, as a tactical group, ceases to exist. The half regiment must manage to be in readiness to fight without previous dispositions.—'There is but one thing required—*i.e.*, warning.—You must

\* "Cavalry when dismounted acts,—as in all its other operations,—especially upon the morale of the enemy.—To shake the morale it looks for a surprise, and causes it by—

"1. Opening fire unexpectedly on as broad a front as possible, so as to give the impression of an immediate enveloping movement—.

"2. By firing very violent bursts, which, however, will be short in duration and well controlled, so as not to waste ammunition—.

"3. By rapidity of movement, which allows it to appear where least expected or desired—.

"4. By abruptly breaking off an encounter, which will be resumed where and when most convenient to itself, thus enervating and exhausting the enemy—.

"Finally, dismounted action requires thoroughly efficient protection.—It is essential that cavalry dismounted should rely upon exemption from attack in flank and rear without receiving adequate warning.—The led horses are a tempting and easy prey to an enterprising hostile cavalry.—Dismounted action, therefore, demands either that superiority should previously have been gained over the enemy's cavalry, or the shelter of some obstacle which neutralizes its intervention or retards its appearance."—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

## 26 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

break up into combat patrols.—In this case the whole troop would have been thus absorbed.—The orders to have been given should have been : Section A, towards Troux-Montigny ; Section B, towards Voisins ; Section C (the remainder) towards Villaroy. Reassemble at 1.40 p.m. at the exit from Voisins.

You ordered dismounted action against cavalry at 650 yards in open country ?—This was an error ; you now see the penalty you had to pay.—You should have mounted and intervened in the fight, either by a demonstration in open order—or by a flank attack.—THE DIRECTOR.

### PROBLEM C (*continued*)

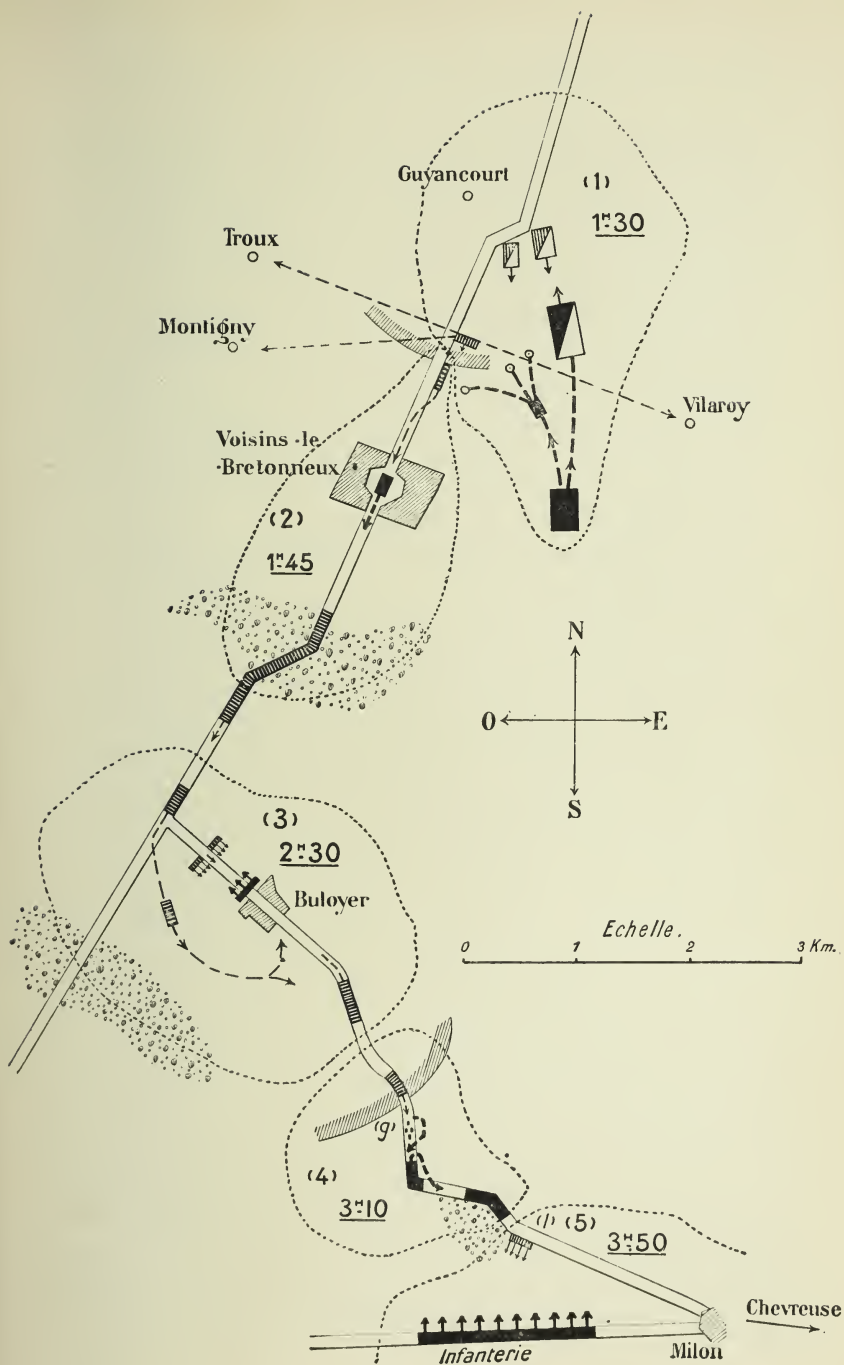
*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. D.

*Advanced Guard.*—Passing through a village.

*Special Idea* (1.40 p.m.).—The half regiment is leaving La Minière.—The troop in advanced guard (Lieut. D) has searched Guyancourt and has assembled in observation on the Voisins-le-Bretonneux road immediately south of Guyancourt.—The march resumed.

*Execution.*—I move at the trot, followed by my troop.

*First Bound.*—To point 154.—I send two scouts forward and halt on the crest of the hill, concealed by a haystack.—Order to Sergeant X and four men : “Search the village of Voisins-le-Bretonneux.”



MAP 4.

## 28 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

*Second Incident* (1.45 p.m.).—Information brought back by Sergeant X: "A patrol of the enemy's cavalry in a single body, ten or twelve strong, mounted, is at this moment in the main street of Voisins.—We have not been discovered."—Order to the troop: "Follow me; gallop!"—I take to the road and charge straight ahead into the village. The enemy is surprised and severely mauled although they mostly contrive to escape.—The march resumed.

*First Bound.*—To the southern exit from the Garenne wood.

*Second Bound.*—To the Buloyer road.

*Third Incident* (2.30 p.m.).—The troop is assembled on the road to Dampierre where it joins the road from Buloyer.—Information from my leading patrol: "A hostile troop is at your end of Buloyer. The road has been barricaded. The men are dismounted and ready for action.—There are no horses visible."—It is my intention to envelop the enemy.—I order, therefore: "Nos. 1 and 2 sections (with me): Dismounted action; at the barricade, six rounds, fire!"—I then lead the sections forward to a position some 450 yards from the obstruction.—Order:—"At 450 yards, fire!"—Order to No. 3 section (Sergeant Y): "Move off to the right along the edge of the wood and come into Buloyer from the rear at the gallop!"—The enemy hold their ground.—The half regiment comes up.—The hostile troop withdraws.—LIEUT. D.



*Criticism* (2).—A hostile mounted patrol is reported halted in the village of Voisins.—You didn't hesitate, and charged.—That was perfectly right so far as it went, but you might possibly have captured it.—To do this you should have sent one of your sections round in rear and then yourself attacked with the two others. During his campaign in Gaul, Cæsar attempted this stratagem against the Helvetians.

*Criticism* (3).—Against Buloyer and its barricade you opened fire with two sections, while the third manœuvred to the rear.—Good!—But your plan failed.—Why? Because your third section was so poorly handled.—This is one of the secrets of war. So long as Napoleon led the manœuvre—*i.e.*, the predominant force—himself, he won the most brilliant victories. When he first began to allow his subordinates to lead the manœuvring body and relied upon a frontal attack,\* as he did at Bautzen, Dresden, and Ligny, he was only partially successful.—Invariably, almost, the manœuvre mis-

\* The Japanese have long since been convinced that in the great majority of cases it is impossible to pierce the fighting front, and that it is necessary to operate by turning movements.

They consequently realize that such movements are the chief source of danger, and invariably place strong reserves on their flanks.—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.

“It has happened that a flank attack has so absorbed the enemy that the frontal attack has finally succeeded in dealing the decisive blow.—The most remarkable example of this kind was the storming of the Rother Berg in the Battle of Spicheren.”

—KRAFT: *Infantry*.

## 30 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

carried.—What ought you to have done?—One section should have opened fire while you yourself led the two remaining sections, mounted, to manœuvre in rear of the enemy.

### PROBLEM C (*continued*).

*Troop Scheme*.—Lieut. A.

*Advanced Guard (continued)*.—The offensive,—mounted.

*Special Idea* (3 p.m.).—The troop in advanced guard is at the south-western exit from Buloyer. The half regiment is moving along the Buloyer road.—The march resumed.

*Execution: First Bound*.—To the exit from Romainville.—Passage of the village.—Halt.

*Second Bound*.—To the point G.

*Fourth Incident* (3.10).—I am at point G,—hidden behind a hay-stack.—There are four hostile horsemen, together mounted at the bend of the road some 450 yards away.—I make a deliberate charge with the whole of my troop.—The horsemen turn about and I gallop in pursuit.—My men are cheering.—We come upon a party of about thirty of the enemy 100 yards further on, they also turn about, I pursue, but catch sight of a considerable column of cavalry 550 yards ahead.—I halt, send back word, etc.—LIEUT. A.

*Criticism*.—You charged four men!—Wonderful! It is impossible to congratulate you sufficiently.—

In open country, you sped forward along the road. Of course; invariably do so, and encourage your men to do the same, even if you are being fired at—not from behind barricades, of course.—Had you gone on the entire column might have taken to flight,\* thinking you were being followed up. This happened at Mont Cricole in 1866.—Even as it was you discovered the enemy's column.

### PROBLEM C (*continued*).

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. A.

*Advanced Guard (continued).* — Dismounted action.—Leading a troop into a fire position and fire-control.†

\* “If small bodies show a resolute determination to attack at once on every feasible opportunity, cavalry may establish a moral superiority over the opposing cavalry, which will prove of inestimable value throughout the campaign.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 271.

† “‘Our soldiers,’ said General von Kessel, ‘rarely had recourse to rapid fire. The proof of this was the small number of rounds expended per man during the campaign. For many years, however, we had lost no opportunity of impressing upon the men that they carried a weapon superior to that of any other European army, and the pains we took with rifle practice only strengthened the conviction.’—This confidence was increased and strengthened after the first action, when they realized the security afforded by a weapon capable of such rapid loading. Critics continually talk of rapid fire. The expression is incorrect, and gives a false notion; they should speak rather of rapid loading. At Königshof, on 29th June, 1866, the Prussians had a sharp encounter with the enemy. After the action, which took place in fields waving with high corn, Colonel von Kessel surveyed the ground. What was his astonishment to find for every

## 32 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

*Special Idea* (3.30 p.m.).—The half regiment is moving out of Romainville.—The troop in advanced guard (Lieut. A) is in observation, halted at point G.—The march resumed.

*Execution.*—The troop moves by successive bounds.—First bound to point H.—We halt for a few minutes.—Second bound to point L.—I advance along the skirts of the wood.—Order to Sergeant X and four men—"To point L—Move swiftly ahead and make for the first clearing to the right of point L."

*Fifth Incident* (3.50 p.m.).—Sergeant X signals from point L: "Enemy in sight."—I ride forward and catch sight of an infantry column advancing along the valley below me on the road from Pont Royal to Milon, some 450 yards away.—Order to the troop: "Dismounted action."—The troop dismounts 450 yards from point L.—The horses, which remain at the side of the road, are held by one man from each rank.—I lead the dismounted men at the double to point L and give the order: "At the enemy's column, at 450 yards,

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Prussian, five or six Austrian corpses. The Austrian dead had been mostly hit in the head. Our men, far from rapid fire, had hardly shot as many rounds as the enemy. The Austrian officers who were made prisoners told the Prussians, 'Our soldiers were demoralized, not by the rapidity of your fire, but because you were always ready to fire.'"—STOFFEL: *Military Reports*.

"But, in my opinion, the principal cause of our reverses was the immense superiority of the marksmanship in the English infantry."—MARBOT: *Memoirs*.

fire!"—The hostile infantry at once deploy to the left, and put 200 rifles into line.—Some of their scouts begin to climb the hill protected by dead ground. The half regiment gallops up, but is driven back, etc.—LIEUT. A.

*Criticism.*—You suddenly found yourself on the flank of a column of the enemy's infantry which you surprised by the fire of your troop.—This was essentially cavalry work.\*—You led your troop well to their fire position; but as regards fire-control,† you

\* The Japanese made use of their cavalry in battle in a perfectly logical manner—*i.e.*, they employed it as an arm of the service of which the essential mode of action is rifle-fire, and as a force which can be rapidly moved to any special point where its action is most required.—DE NÉGRIER.

† "If officers recognize that good fire discipline is essential in order to kill the enemy, they will take more trouble to instil it. As our cavalry are undoubtedly the best shooting cavalry in the world, it is a pity to spoil the ship for this ha'porth of tar (fire discipline)."—RIMINGTON: *Our Cavalry*.

"If the mere fact that a N.C.O. in a situation of extreme danger is willing and cool enough to correct the sights of the men's rifles is to be regarded as something out of the common, it is quite evident we ought not to expect very much from the firing of troops in battle. In shooting it is an elementary condition that the correct sight should be used. If this is found to be impossible, we may just as well give up any idea either of trying to make men hold their rifles in the right position, to aim straight, or, what is equally important, to pull the trigger steadily, and attend to other points of vital necessity."—GOLTZ: *Das Volk in Vaffien*.

"Of all the incidents of a modern fight, that of which it is the hardest to give any conception, is the intense absorption in the mere fact of firing, which, almost like a catalepsy, takes possession of the men."—MAURICE: *Wellington Prize Essay*.



## 34 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

did not specify the number of rounds—this was a mistake.—Fire should be ordered in bursts so that it can be kept under control.

Secondly, when you saw the enemy's infantry you did not hesitate.—It was a tempting opportunity, but you were not without support. 'The 200 rifles of your half regiment, if brought into line at the right moment, would have produced an even more striking result.—You would have been better advised to have waited for it.—Still it served the C.O. right for not being with you.—THE DIRECTOR.

As regards "Dismounted action."—For cavalry the chief danger to be feared in dismounted action is from the enemy's cavalry.—This danger may be minimized by the absence of hostile cavalry, by the difficult nature of the country, or by the presence of a mounted reserve.

In this case, as the half regiment was acting as a mounted reserve to the advanced guard, dismounted action was the defensive phase of an offensive manœuvre.—It deceived the enemy while the mounted body carried out a turning movement. This method should often be employed, and all ranks should be thoroughly trained in it.—The third incident emphasizes this necessity.—Similar incidents should be frequently introduced.—THE MAJOR.

Dismounted action for cavalry is but a means to an end, and as such its use is well understood.\*—Its

\* "Long ago the Russian cavalry learnt that as essentially the offensive arm, since shock tactics can now only be put into

employment, however, in this capacity should not be allowed to interfere with its mounted duties. The Director is to be congratulated on the creation of the second and fourth incidents, both of which call for solutions emphasizing the natural functions of the mounted arm.—As regards information, Directors are requested to see that it takes the form of answers to questions—"Who?"—"Where?"—"When?"—and "How?"—so that by giving answers to the questions asked, all ranks may become thoroughly accustomed to its transmission.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

*To the Director.*—As regards the leading of the troop, you were quite right to create a variety of incidents calling for initiative and decision on the part of the Leader.—To deal with sudden and unforeseen events, the mind must necessarily remain constantly on the alert.—Again, in teaching, it is the mistakes which are instructive.—Further, it must not be forgotten, in carrying out these exercises, that it is the Officer Commanding who leads, and he alone.—He combines experience with the sense of responsibility inseparable from his rank and administration.—He cannot delegate his power, but should give precise orders to everybody concerned.—In rare cases, should orders not be forthcoming, he will have given sufficient instruc-

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practice on very rare occasions, rifle fire must be its normal mode of fighting.—All Russian cavalry soldiers are thus in reality dragoons."—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.

## 36 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

tions beforehand to permit of his intentions being carried out.

To sum up, in such cases as those treated above, and none the less as a general principle,—when on the march there should be both a distant protective, and a close protective force, to the Commanders of which, ~~collectively~~ and separately, the C.O. will give his orders and instructions.\*—In action the eight troops are at the disposal of the C.O., and he will launch them in the attack, either together or successively, as he finds it desirable. This principle lies at the very root of every operation.—It is the brain of the leader which sets all the wheels in motion.—It is his brain which is predominant.—The C.O., therefore, should himself breathe the very atmosphere of his advanced guard.—THE COLONEL.

### No. 4.

*Troop Scheme.*—Taking possession of a village.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers.

*Rendezvous* (December 22, 1 p.m.).—Renne-moulins.

\* “As a general principle it is not possible for any body of troops efficiently to carry out general protective duties and a special mission at the same time.—A different body of troops consequently should usually be detailed for each of these separate duties.”—*F. S. Regs.*, part i., p. 89.

## PROBLEM D.

*General Idea* (Paris besieged, 1870).—Half a regiment (two squadrons) from Versailles, where the main body is halted, has been carrying out requisitions in the region of Noisy — Renne-moulins.

The enemy is reported advancing from the south. The inhabitants are not to be relied upon, and there is general unrest.—Some horsemen have been fired upon from the vicinity of Villepreux.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The half regiment is carrying out a requisition at Rennemoulins.

*Order to Lieut. A*: “Go with your troop to Villepreux; take four hostages, and return with them to me.”—THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Report.*

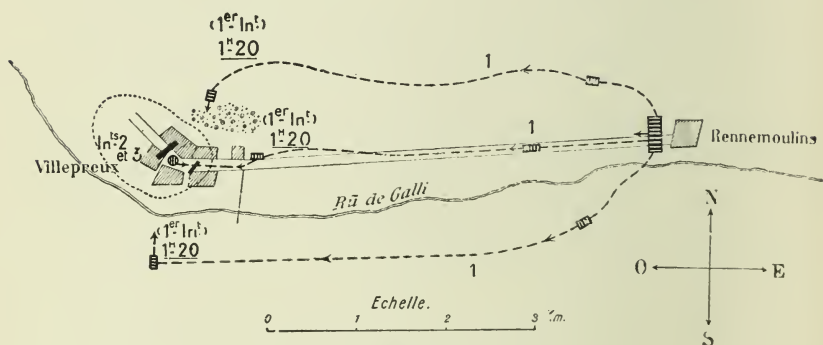
*Troop Scheme*.—Lieut. A: Taking possession of a village.—Dispersion and Concentration.\*

*Execution*.—The troop, mounted, is assembled at the western exit from Rennemoulins.—It is my intention to throw out “feelers” in the direction of the village of Villepreux from the north, south,

\* “If a village must be traversed, a few men should be sent ahead to encircle it and block the exits on the further side, thus preventing any inhabitant leaving with news of the arrival of the detachment.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 261.

## 38 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

and east, and to enter it simultaneously from these three directions.—To do this I give the orders—No. 1 Section: “North of the valley to the crest,—direction, to the north of Villepreux”;—No. 2 Section: “South of the valley in the direction of Villepreux which you will enter from the left.” I lead the third section myself along the road from Rennemoulins to Villepreux.—(1.20 p.m.) I am on the road rather more than 100 yards



MAP 5.

from Villepreux, concealed behind a wall.—I try to find out what is going on.—My two first sections show no signs of their whereabouts.—I wait.

1.30.—All appears to be quiet.—I decide to enter the village with the section I have with me. Preceded by a scout, I enter Villepreux at the gallop, and make for the Town Hall.

*First Incident (1.35 p.m.).*—In the centre of the



village I come upon a barricade.\*—I turn about to escape by another street.—A dozen armed men appear and bar the way.

All is not lost, but I find I have been trapped.

End of scheme.—LIEUT. A.

*Criticism.*—You disposed of your three sections at the very beginning, and gave them all a vague order to assemble on the square at Villepreux.—Two were lost; or else all three were beaten in detail.—That is one way of concentrating upon the enemy.—If you are to manœuvre successfully, you must begin by locating your opponent.—In any case think,—and be prepared for emergencies.†

You should have led your whole troop northwards, concealed by the ridge, until you reached the trees near the village.—There you should have halted to make observations—and then acted. You might, for instance, have sent a few men to show themselves to the east of the village on the Renne-moulins road, so as to entice the villagers in that direction.—If you wished you might have ordered these men to fire a few shots, while you turned the village by the west, and entered it at the gallop with swords drawn or lance in hand. Had you taken the village by surprise, you

\* “. . . But occasionally, when time is pressing, the point may be directed to gallop straight through a village.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 258.

† See note on p. 37.

## 40 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

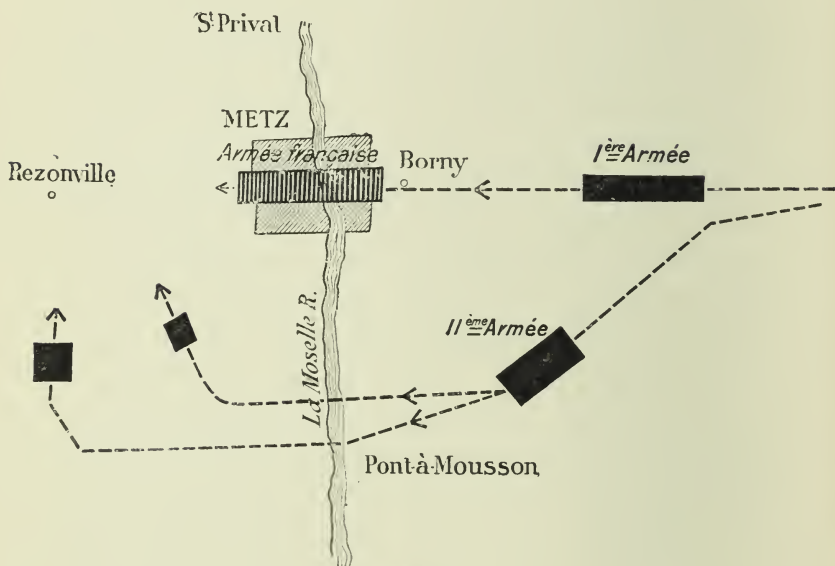
would have been master of the situation.—THE DIRECTOR.

This is a valuable lesson, and should be remembered.—THE MAJOR.

*Initialed*, The Lieut.-Colonel.

### PURSUIT.

1870.—After Forbach, the French Army retired upon Metz, pursued by the First and Second



MAP 6.

German Armies.—The intention of the German Headquarters Staff was both to anticipate and to hinder it by the making use of the interior roads and byways.—To do this orders were given to the First

Army to march straight upon Metz to frustrate the enemy's movement ; and to the Second Army to move south by Pont-à-Mousson, to cross the Moselle, and then move north towards the Verdun roads, which were to be held before the French Army could reach them.

## No. 5.

*Troop Scheme.*—Pursuit.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers.

*Rendezvous* (January 3, 1 p.m.).—The Trappes road. The south-western exit from Saint Cyr.

## PROBLEM E.

*General Idea.*—After a battle on the uplands of Versailles, the hostile army, which has been defeated, is retiring by different routes to the west.—A detachment following the Saint Cyr road is pursued by a battalion of infantry and a troop of cavalry.

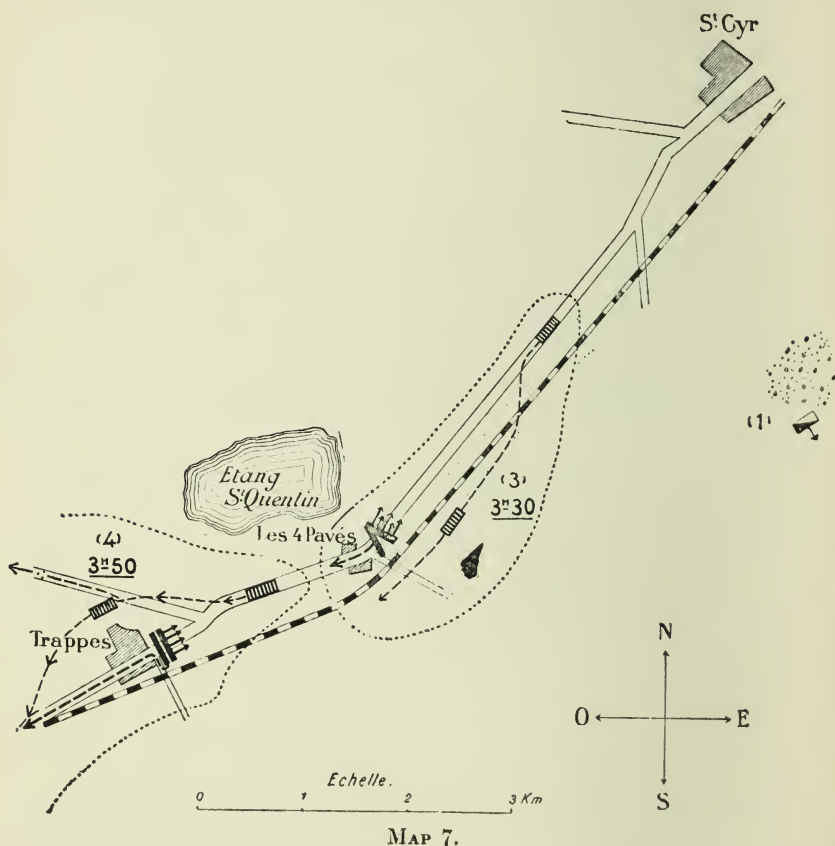
*Special Idea.*—At 1 p.m. the battalion is leaving Saint Cyr by the Trappes road.—The troop of cavalry is with the battalion.—Order by the Battalion Commander to the Troop Leader : “ I am told that a detachment of the enemy passed through Saint Cyr at 11 a.m. following the Trappes road.—It is my intention to pursue all day.—Gain contact.”  
—THE DIRECTOR.

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### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. A : Pursuit.

*Execution.*—I move off at the gallop with the whole of my troop along the road.—It is my inten-



tion to go on straight ahead till I gain contact.—It is only in the event of my coming up with any of the hostile cavalry that I shall throw out patrols to search for the main body of the enemy.

*First Incident* (1.10 p.m.).—As I reach the level-crossing on the Bouviers road, I catch sight of a hostile troop at the eastern extremity of Bois Robert: it is moving on Guyancourt.—I continue to advance without taking any measures against it.

*Second Incident* (1.15 p.m.).—On arriving at the top of the eminence commanding Quatre-Pavés, I notice a troop of the enemy marching on Trappes. It is 330 yards in front of me.—Order to the troop: “Form line: charge!”—

*Third Incident* (3.30 p.m.).—The road at Quatre-Pavés is barricaded, and the two men I have in advanced guard are fired upon.—I make a round-about movement with the whole of my troop in a southerly direction along the line of railway.—The hostile troop mount and ride hastily away.

*Fourth Incident* (3.50 p.m.).—I am being fired upon from the houses on the outskirts of Trappes.

The enemy's troop has arrived before me, and is fighting dismounted.—I move round by the pool of Saint Quentin to the north of Trappes.—The hostile troop mount, and disappear down the Rambouillet road.—I pursue.—Order to Sergeant X and four men: “Reconnoitring patrol on the Neauphle road.”—LIEUT. A.

*Criticism.*—No matter what your plan, always send a reconnoitring patrol out ahead.—This will form your “distant protection”—(paragraph 24, French Field Service Regulations).—On leaving Saint Cyr you failed to do this.—It was a mistake.



#### 44 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

You pursued with energy, and didn't study your horses.—In the circumstances you were right. Whenever you come upon the hostile troop, you turn it, and it is invariably made to retire.—But you are always coming upon it again.—Capture it, and have done with it.—At Quatre-Pavés you should not have hesitated to leave one of your sections <sup>for</sup> on the enemy's front.—It would have retained it in its position, while concealed by the railway-line, you galloped off with your remaining sections, and attacked it in rear.—THE DIRECTOR.

Lieut. A did not lose sight of his mission: the retention of contact, which meant the discovery of the enemy's main body.—At Trappes he followed the Rambouillet road upon the heels of the enemy's troop, and at the same time sent out a reconnoitring patrol towards Neauphle.—This patrol, I think, should have been sent out while the troop was still at Saint Cyr.\*—THE MAJOR.

You were endeavouring to gain contact.—It was the duty of the hostile cavalry to prevent your doing so.—You sent out patrols—it was possible they might not get through, or they might not return.—The ground was open, and you were pursuing. Your

\* "The most successful reconnaissance is wasted if its results only become known to the General in command too late to be of use. Commanders of the larger units, and of all advanced parties of cavalry, must therefore devote their attention to insuring information being swiftly and safely forwarded."—*Feld Dienst Ordnung*.

patrols would have no great difficulties to contend against unless it was in the Trappes or Neauphle woods. A cavalry engagement, by concentrating the enemy at the point where it takes place, clears the ground and allows your patrols to pass.\*—Even were this the sole advantage in engaging the enemy's cavalry, it is of sufficient importance to justify it.—I see you realized this by your first orders.

On August 15, 1870, a few gun-shots, in the neighbourhood of Rezonville, by the Murat Brigade, at a couple of squadrons of Prussian cavalry, led to the concentration of the Rheinbaden division disposed at that moment on a front of twelve with a depth of nearly twenty miles.—By 1 p.m. the division had concentrated.—What a splendid opportunity for the French cavalry (the Forton and Valabrègue Divisions situated upon its front) to have thrown out their reconnaissances to the south to obtain the information of which the army that day stood in such dire need!—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

## NO. 6.

*Troop Scheme.*—Pursuit.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

\* “During reconnaissances, when the opposing armies are not far distant from each other, it may often be advisable for a detachment to dismount and open fire in order to engage the enemy's attention whilst its patrols move forward to suitable points for observation from which the attention of the enemy has been diverted.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 262.

## 46 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

*Taking Part.*—Troop Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (January 10, 1 p.m.).—Western exit from Saint Cyr, on the Clayes Road.

### PROBLEM F.

*General Idea.*—See the preceding exercise (Problem D).

*Special Idea.*—At 1 p.m. the battalion in pursuit, with the troop of cavalry attached to it, is on the Clayes road, at the exit from Saint Cyr.

*Order of the O.C. Battalion to Lieut. B.*—I am informed that a hostile detachment is retiring along the Clayes road.—It passed through Saint Cyr at 11 a.m.—I intend to follow it up. Go on ahead and gain contact.—THE DIRECTOR.

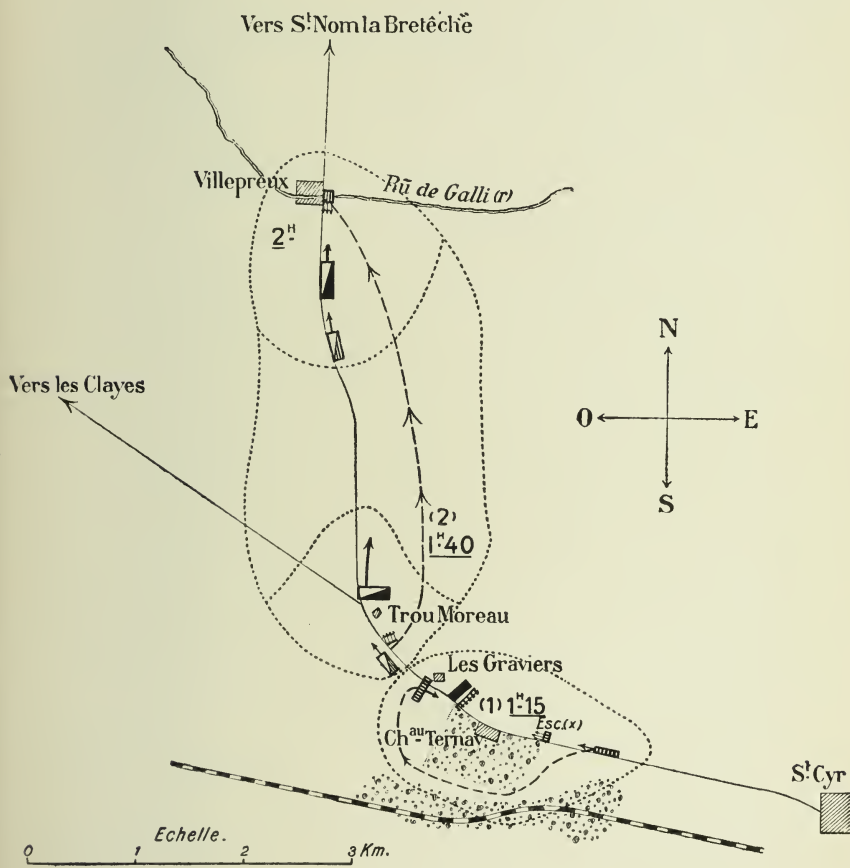
### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. B: Pursuit.

*Execution.*—I move off at the trot, and afterwards canter\* down the Clayes road.—I intend to act according to circumstances.—The road is bounded on the <sup>left</sup> ~~right~~ by the railway-line, and on the <sup>right</sup> ~~left~~ by wire fencing, walls, etc. . . . I send out an advanced guard (a Corporal and three men).

\* "Canter."—From the easy, ambling movement of the mounts favoured by the many millions of mediæval pilgrims to the shrine of St. Thomas of Canterbury. Similarly, "saunterer" and "tourist" owe their origin to those taking part in the pilgrimages to the Holy Land (Sainte-Terre) and the shrine of St. Martin at Tours. In the same way, "roamer" owes its derivation to the countless pilgrims to the Eternal City.—BENNETT-GOLDNEY: *Canterbury Pilgrims*.

*First Incident* (1.15 p.m.).—I am 650 yards from the Castle of Ternay.—A troop of the enemy, dismounted, is at Graviers Farm prepared for action.



MAP 8

The road in front of the farm is obstructed by wire. It is my intention to capture the troop by attacking it in front with one section dismounted and in rear

## 48 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

with the other two. With this end in view, I conceal myself behind the wall of the park of Ternay. Order to No. 1 Section, Sergeant X: "Dismounted action!—Objective, the enemy's troop."—With the remainder I move off by the railway-line, along the south side of the park, and come out at the gallop at Graviers, in rear of the enemy.—I shout the order, "Make for the led horses!"\*—I assemble my troop, and resume the pursuit.

*Second Incident* (1.40 p.m.).—I am at Graviers with my troop.—I question the villagers, and ascertain that some of the enemy's infantry (about a battalion) passed through Trou-Moreau at 11 a.m., making for Villepreux and Saint-Nom-la-Bretèche.

I send back information to the battalion.—A troop of the enemy, mounted, is at Trou-Moreau. It is my intention to capture it at the bridge over the Rû de Galli at Villepreux, where I shall have anticipated its arrival by sending on one of my sections thither.—Meanwhile, I shall keep the enemy occupied, and finally charge with my two remaining sections.—I give the Order, therefore, to Sergeant Y's section: "Move by the right, and gallop to the bridge at Villepreux, barricade it, and hold it by dismounted fire."—To the troop: "Follow me!"—Order to No. 2 Section: "Dis-

\* "Led horses: 1. They must be under cover. 2. They must be as close to the firing-line as circumstances permit."

"The position should not be immediately in rear of the firing-line, as in such a position horses are liable to losses from unaimed fire."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 291.



mounted action!—at the enemy at Trou-Moreau, two rounds, at 650 yards, fire!”—The enemy dismount and return the fire.—I withdraw.—They mount and then make for Villepreux.—I follow and harass them.—At 2.15 p.m. they arrive within range of the bridge at Villepreux, and are fired upon from the barricade.—I at once charge.—  
LIEUT. B.

*Criticism.* — An extremely well carried out manœuvre.—In the first incident you did not hesitate to dismount one section in the open alone in front of a hostile troop.—In the second, when threatened by a mounted troop, you again dismounted in the open.—I do not blame you; in pursuit all things are permissible.—In this case you acted with energy and appropriate daring.—A sound manœuvre.—THE DIRECTOR.

*Initialed, The Major.*

To be noted : (1) Lieut. A's *common sense*, when coming upon a hostile troop dismounted, in ordering, “Make for the led horses!”—Here we have the real secret of the weakness of dismounted cavalry fully emphasized. — *The Director.*

(2) ~~The defensive to be successful must be offensive.~~ — THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

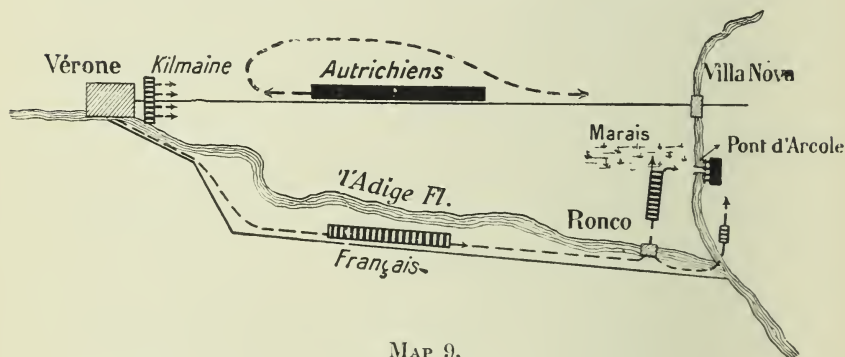
## NAPOLEON'S MANŒUVRE AT ARCOLE.

*November, 1796.*

Bonaparte is at Verona with 15,000 men. Davidovich, with 18,000, is advancing through

the Tyrol; Alvinzy, with 27,000, by Frioul.—The situation is critical.—Napoleon decides to get rid of Alvinzy.

His intention is as follows: To allow Alvinzy to advance on Verona, which is defended by a division and protected by the Adige; then to move rapidly himself with his main body to the bridge at Villa-Nova, in rear of the Austrians, who will thus be caught between two fires.—The Order is therefore given to General Kilmaine (recalled from



MAP 9.

Mantua with 3,000 men) to make a frontal demonstration at Verona, while the General Commanding-in-Chief with the manœuvring force moves on Villa-Nova along the <sup>right</sup> bank of the Adige, which he crosses at Ronco.

The manœuvre is frustrated owing to the difficulty of advancing through the marshes, and by the resistance offered at the Bridge of Arcole, which separated him from Villa-Nova.

Alvinzy warned, hastily retreats and escapes.

## No. 7.

*Troop Exercise.*—Occupation of a bridge.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—Troop Officers and N.C.O's.

### PROBLEM G.

*Rendezvous* (1 p.m.).—Guyancourt.

*General Idea.*—A brigade of infantry is engaged on its front.—Its alignment lies between Guyancourt, and the Saint Quentin pond, facing Trappes Wood.—

*Special Idea.*—At 1 p.m. a troop of cavalry at the disposal of the Brigadier receives the following order: Occupy the bridge over the Bièvre at La Minière on the left flank of the brigade.—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

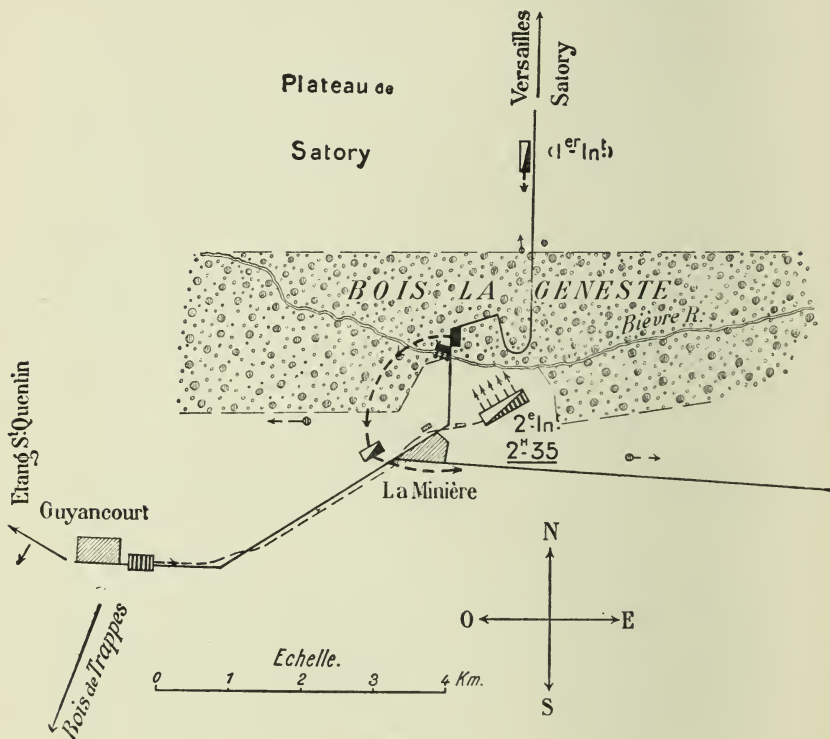
*Troop Exercise.*—Lieut. C: Defensive action. Occupation of a bridge.

*Execution.*—I intend to make for La Minière with the whole of my troop and defensively hold the bridge over the Bièvre.—Order to Corporal A and four men: “Move on ahead, reconnoitre the village and the means of crossing the stream, then push forward along the road to Versailles as far as the further extremity of the wood.”—On arriving at La Minière I receive no information.—I dismount my men to the right of the Guyancourt road on the ridge, where I can command the bridge at a range of 220 yards.—The led horses are well concealed in

## 52 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

the nearest lane parallel to the road.—I send out two patrols of a couple of men to my right and left.

*First Incident (2 p.m.).*—A hostile troop is reported on the road from Versailles.—It is emerging on to the plateau of Satory, and is apparently



MAP 10.

making for La Minière.—It is at the walk (information sent in by the Corporal who has remained in contact).—I order my men to remain on the look out, as I intend to open fire upon the enemy as he crosses the bridge.

*Second Incident* (2.20 p.m.).—The hostile troop is still advancing along the Versailles road.—My patrol returns at the gallop.—I open fire.—The enemy disappears, but a few minutes later our fire is returned.—The fight continues to drag on.\*

2.35 p.m.—A hostile troop appears on my left at the gallop.—I have only just time to mount. I lose half my men.—The passage across the river is sacrificed.—LIEUT. C.

*Criticism* (1).—You should have placed an obstruction across the road over the bridge; you would then have been less insecure.—This would have been only an elementary precaution to have taken. (2)—You should have fought your dismounted action with greater vigour. (3)—Lastly, you should have retained a mounted reserve which could have charged and prevented the enemy resorting to dismounted action.—It would have saved the situation.—But these are details.—Once warned of the hostile troop marching on La Minière, you should have left one section there.—Protected by a barricade on the bridge, it could have held the enemy by its fire.—Meanwhile, with the remainder of your men, mounted, you should have moved rapidly to your

\* “Victory is ours as soon as we have convinced the enemy that he has got the worst of the fight. This, however, will never be admitted, no matter how fatal the shower of bullets, if the assailant continues to remain at a respectful distance. If, on the contrary, the latter advances, the defender is convinced that even the most accurate shooting cannot save him from capture.”  
—GOLTZ: *Das Volk in Waffen*.



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right by the Saint Geneste wood and charged the enemy from the rear.—He would have been captured, and you would not have lost the passage over the river.

The defensive must be offensive ; otherwise you are at the mercy of the attack.\*—THE DIRECTOR.

*Initialed*, The Major.

*Initialed*, The Lieut.-Colonel.

### NO. 8.

*Troop Scheme*.—Billets.—First line protection.

*Director*.—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part*.—The Troop Leaders.

*Rendezvous* (January 24, 1 p.m.).—Northern exit from Saint Cyr, on the Saint Germain road.

### PROBLEM H.

*General Idea*.—A cavalry brigade acting as the first line protective force is moving ahead of an army corps marching from Rambouillet upon Saint Germain.—It is billeted on the 24th in the Vale of Chevreuse.—Reconnoitring detachments are sent out in the afternoon towards the Rû de Galli.

The enemy is reported in the neighbourhood of Saint Germain.

\* The Russo-Japanese War has demonstrated once again that it is by offensive tactics alone that victory can be assured. An army forced to take the defensive, whether owing to circumstances of a political nature, or in consequence of its numerical inferiority, must defend itself by incessant counter-attacks.—  
DE NÉGRIER.

*Special Idea.*—Lieut. D, with his troop supporting an officer's patrol,\* is following the line of route: Chevreuse—Saint Cyr—Porte Bailly and Marly.—He leaves Saint Cyr at 4 p.m. and takes his dispositions to spend the night on the Rû de Galli.†—THE DIRECTOR.

## *Summary of Report.*

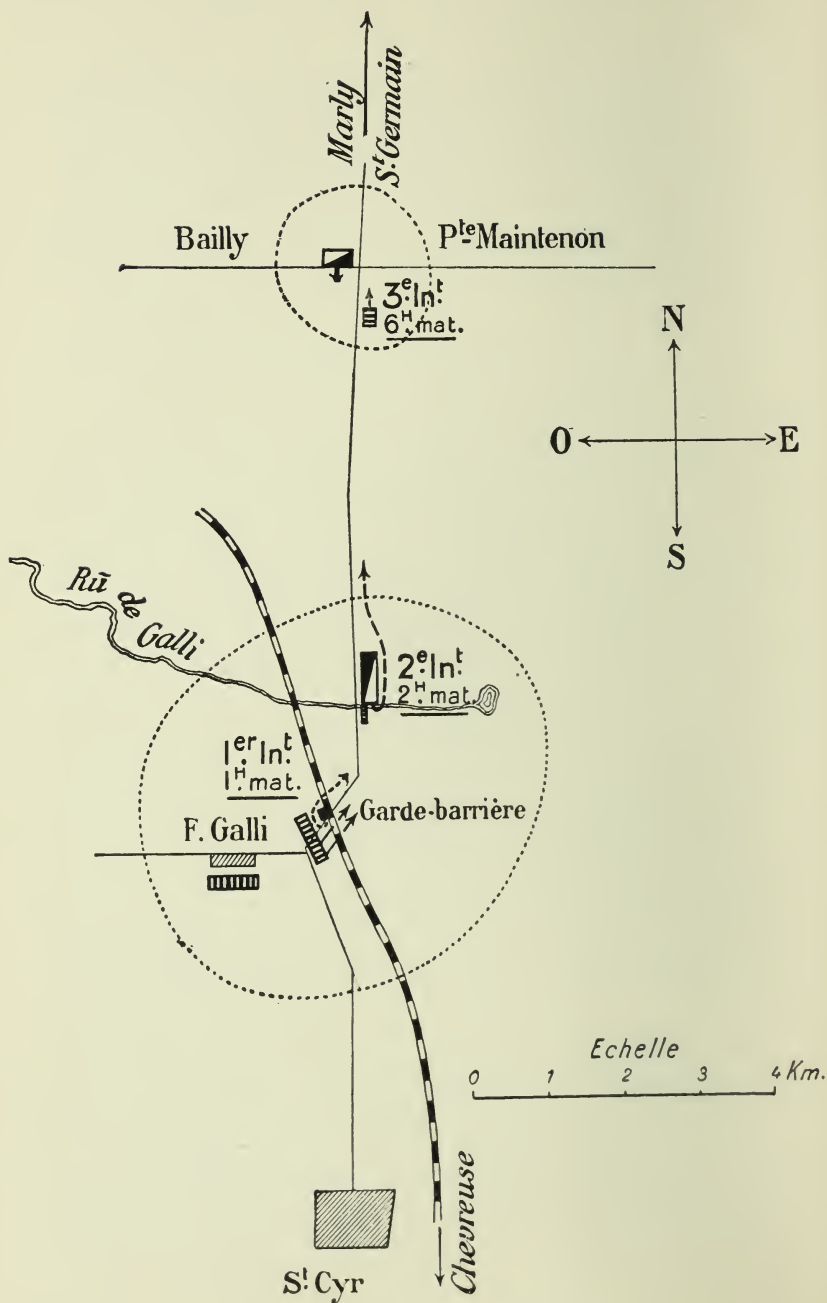
*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. D.

*Execution.*—The troop is assembled at the exit from Saint Cyr.—There are no signs of the enemy in the neighbourhood.—I go to the gate-keeper's lodge at the level railway-crossing, close the gates over the road, and place wire entanglements across the ford over the stream.—As soon as it is dark I move with my troop into the farm at Galli. Two men, dismounted, remain at the railway-crossing, and will be relieved every two hours. The horses are fed and watered in reliefs, and remain saddled.—I mean to push on at dawn, meanwhile I remain on the look out.

*First Incident* (1 a.m.).—It is bright moonlight. A hostile patrol, some seven or eight strong, is

\* "Unless supplemented by larger bodies ready to fight and make an opening for them to advance further, patrols will seldom be able to obtain much information, or should they succeed when unsupported in penetrating a protective line, they will be unable to send back their information."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 256.

† "Patrols and detachments sent to reconnoitre the enemy should always be prepared to be out for several days."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 262.



MAP 11.

coming towards Saint Cyr by the Marly road.—The two sentries fire three or four shots.—The patrol turns back.

*Second Incident* (2 a.m.).—A hostile troop moving along the same road in the direction of Saint Cyr is stopped by the wire entanglement at the Rû de Galli.—My men double up to the barrier and open fire; the enemy replies, but retires after about half an hour.

*Third Incident* (6 a.m.).—The officer's reconnaissance starts.—Lieut. D's troop remains on the banks of the Rû de Galli so as to make it a certainty that information shall be forwarded.

The reconnaissance falls into an ambush at Porte de Bailly.—LIEUT. D.

*Criticism.*—So far as the Regulations are concerned, you carried out your mission correctly. You overlooked, however, your "distant protection." It is true you kept your horses saddled and placed obstructions at the ford over the brook, which might have sufficed.—Your dispositions were good.—You prevented the enemy crossing the stream, which was something.—The hostile troop, nevertheless, ascertained your whereabouts, and in the morning captured your officer's patrol.—You ought to have done more; you should have prepared an ambush yourself, and first captured the enemy's patrol and the troop afterwards.—THE DIRECTOR.

With regard to an officer's patrol being supported by a troop commanded by another officer, this

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ought not to be admitted as a precedent.—A conflict of opinion is almost certain to occur.—I don't like the idea of an officer—(Lieut. C)—of a patrol backed up by another officer—(Lieut. D).—Which of the two is to command if Lieut. C is junior to Lieut. D?—You should have ordered Lieut. D in reconnaissance with his troop, or else Lieuts. C and D jointly in reconnaissance with Lieut. C's or Lieut. D's troop.\*—THE MAJOR.

*As regards the Problem itself.*—The reconnoitring detachments sent out on the 24th by the first line protective troops are a day ahead of the cavalry and consequently a day and a half ahead of the Army Corps.—They ensure the distant protection

\* “During the first fortnight in May, 1904, General Rennekampf was at Saimatseu with 20 sotnias,<sup>2</sup> batteries, and 2 battalions covering the left wing of Keller's Corps, which was faced by the Japanese guns. He was ordered to ascertain the strength of the Japanese force in the upper valley of the Diapoutsu-ho.

“To carry out this duty the General organized his reconnaissance on an unusual scale, with a radius of sixty miles on each side of Saimatseu. As he feared being cut off in such a mountainous country, he extended his force along the whole line, and sent out his reconnaissances two sotnias strong.

“They ascertained nothing; the troops were exhausted, and the only information gathered at all was from unreliable Chinese sources. The General returned to Saimatseu with his division worn-out.

“Taught by experience, he finally had recourse to officers' patrols, and at last obtained the information he had vainly tried to obtain with his detachments, which were not only too cumbersome, but lacking in sufficient mobility.”—LIEUT.-COLONEL MEUNIER: *Les Détachements de la Guerre Russo-Japonaise*.



of the latter from the time of its departure on the 25th till its arrival in camp. Reconnoitring detachments continue to fulfil this duty even when halted.\*—Fresh reconnoitring detachments will be sent out at night on the 25th. This is the theory, and it is well to bear it in mind.—I think it is correct.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

## No. 9.

*Troop Scheme.*—

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (January 31, 1 p.m.).—Trappes.

## PROBLEM I.

*General Idea.*—Paris besieged, 1870.—On the 31st half a regiment (two squadrons) from Saint Germain reconnoitring to the south, is billeted at Trappes.—The inhabitants are unfriendly, and the enemy's scouts have been seen in the Vale of Chevreuse.

*Special Idea* (4 p.m.).—Men and horses are fed at their billets.—A patrol has brought in a prisoner. Order of the O.C. half regiment to Lieut. A: "I have information that a force of hostile cavalry, some thirty strong, is to leave Dampierre for Voisins-le-Bretonneux to-night.—Go to the Dam-

\* "The action of cavalry does not cease entirely at night. Only those whose services are no longer required go into quarters near the reserve. . . ."—COLONEL GRIEPENKERL: *Letters on Applied Tactics*.

## 60 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

pierre road with your troop and prepare an ambush. The half regiment will assemble at Voisins tomorrow at 6 a.m.”—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. A : An Ambush.

*Execution.*—I start at 4.30 p.m.—It is still twilight.—I move in single file, and in absolute silence, along the northern fringe of the Garenne wood.—I choose a spot for the ambush on the Dampierre road where it intersects the wood.—I find a waggon, and place it across the road at its northern exit. I order one section to dismount near the barrier. The two remaining sections, also dismounted, are at the southern exit from the wood.—The led horses are some distance off among the trees. I give an order that no one coming from Voisins to Dampierre shall be permitted to pass.

*First Incident* (11 p.m.).—It is clear moonlight. We hear the clatter of horses' hoofs in the direction of Dampierre.—Everyone is in readiness.—A cavalryman trots by, we allow him to pass,\* he returns at the gallop, we intercept him and he fires : the enemy's troop turns about. . . .—LIEUT. A.

\* “*Reconnoitring Patrols.*—The first, called ‘the gate,’ consists of marksmen, whose duty it is to allow the enemy to pass unmolested without giving any sign of their existence. The second comprises the bulk of the troop. When the enemy's reconnaissance arrives near the position it is signalled and received with rapid fire. When it falls back it is attacked in turn by ‘the gate.’”—DE NÉGRIER : *Lessons of the Russo-Japanese War.*

*Criticism.*—What was your idea?—If it was to prevent the enemy getting through, you succeeded ; but that was not enough, you ought to have captured him.—You should have concealed your waggon and only placed it across the road at the last moment. A few strands of wire, which are invisible, would have been better.—You could have seized the scout as he stumbled or fell, he would not then have had time to fire.—The rest would have been easy.—I think two mounted sections charging the troop from the rear would have been more effective than your dismounted men.—You were out to defeat the enemy, not merely to give him a scare.—THE DIRECTOR.

Operations will be uncertain, and can only produce undecided results if they are not carefully thought out beforehand.—The plan of action must be clearly defined.—The Director must see that officers invariably explain their intentions.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

## DETACHMENTS OF FIRST-LINE PROTECTION.

### NO. 10.

*Troop Scheme.*—Detachments in first-line protection.\*—Advance through a forest by successive bounds.

\* “The new German Field Service regulations are responsible for the creation of the word ‘verschleierung,’ the ‘veiling’ of columns by detachments whose duty it is to stop all hostile

## 62 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous.*—La Brosse (south of Trappes woods). Dampierre road, February 6, 1 p.m.

### PROBLEM J.

*General Idea.*—A cavalry brigade is marching in advance of an army corps moving from Rambouillet to Saint Germain via Dampierre, Guyancourt, Saint Cyr, etc.—The brigade has sent out detachments ahead in first-line protection—*a, b, c, d*, etc.

Route of the detachments :

(*a*) Rambouillet road—Trappes—Arcy wood.

(*b*) Rambouillet road—Dampierre—Voisins-le-Bretonneux—Guyancourt.

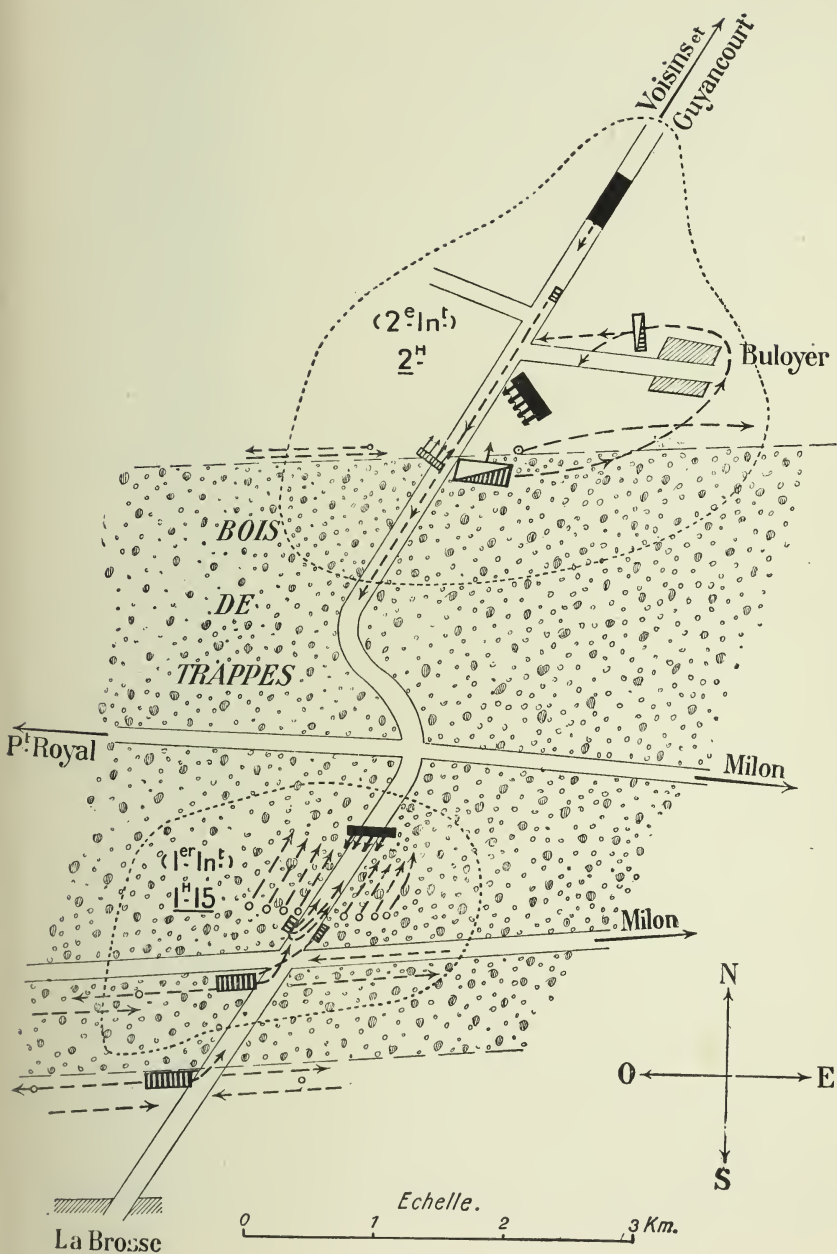
(*c*) Chevreuse—Châteaufort, etc.

The enemy, coming from the north, is reported in the neighbourhood of Saint Germain.

*Special Idea.*—Lieut. B with his troop forms one of the detachments in first-line protection, and follows route B.—At 1 p.m. he is at La Brosse. The whole of his troop is with him.—The enemy has not been seen.—THE DIRECTOR.

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patrols.—We may congratulate ourselves that the German cavalry, more numerous than our own, will thus absorb a large number of their squadrons, which should meet with little success against our brilliantly led officers' patrols. The new German formations will be unable to hold their own against our forces, which will not only be concentrated but well in hand."—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.



MAP 12.



*Summary of Report.**Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. B.*Execution* (1 p.m.).—The troop advances by successive bounds, and crosses the Trappes woods.*First Bound.*—To the <sup>southern</sup>~~northern~~ boundary of the woods ;—ten minutes' halt.—Orders :—*First Section.*—Send out a patrol ahead as far as the first cross-road.*Second Section.*—Send out a patrol to the right—maximum distance three-quarters of a mile.*Third Section.*—Send out a patrol to the left—maximum distance three-quarters of a mile.

At each successive bound the patrols will be sent out in the directions assigned to the different sections to a maximum distance of a mile and a half—the distance to depend upon the time permitted for the halt.—The sections will move off automatically after each halt without waiting for any further orders. — The flank patrols will rally to the starting-point.

*Second Bound.* — The first cross-road ;—ten minutes' halt.*First Incident* (1.15 p.m.).—I hear firing ahead. Information brought in by No. 1 Patrol : “ A hostile cavalry patrol of eight or ten men has dismounted on the road about a third of a mile ahead.—The road is blocked.”—It is my intention to drive back this patrol by a vigorous attack, dismounted.—We shall fire upon them in front, and manœuvre through the

trees.—I give the order, therefore, to Sergeant X.—First and second sections : “Dismounted action.”—These sections extend at the double on both sides of the road.—When rather more than three hundred yards from the barricade, I order Corporal B and four men to halt.—They at once open fire.—No. 1 Section advances by the left ;—No. 2 Section by the right.—They move silently forward in extended order, and when within about twenty yards suddenly open fire upon the enemy, who retreat, and make for their led horses.—I come up with the third section, which I had held back as a mounted reserve.

*Third Bound.*—To the Pont-Royal—Milon cross-roads ; fifteen minutes’ halt.

*Fourth Bound.*—To the <sup>northern</sup> ~~southern~~ boundary of the wood ;—fifteen minutes’ halt.

*Second Incident (2 p.m.).*—The troop has assembled, and is well concealed on the outskirts of the wood.—The patrols have started.—Information sent in by No. 1 Patrol : “A strong hostile troop has just come out of the Garenne wood, and is marching towards us.—It is at the walk, in column of sections.”—It is my intention to wait for, and, if necessary, entice it forward to the fringe of the wood, where it will be held in check by one of my sections fighting dismounted.—In the meantime I shall lead the two others mounted round by Buloyer, so as to charge the enemy in rear.—I give orders, therefore, to Corporal Y, No. 1 Patrol : “Come in along the road at the gallop ; don’t pull up on reaching the

wood, but draw the enemy on.”—To Sergeant X, No. 1 Section: “Dismounted action.—Open fire when the enemy is parallel with the Buloyer road.”\* To the remaining sections: “Mount!—March!” I move off along the boundary of the wood to the south of, and concealed by, Buloyer.

2.10 p.m.—The hostile troop, trotting after Patrol No. 1, is fired upon by my first section.—The men take cover behind a stack on the roadside, and dismount.—Meanwhile I have galloped round by Buloyer, and charge the enemy from the rear.

*Criticism.*—It was your mission to see and to prevent the enemy from seeing.—You should, therefore, be in constant readiness to fight.—For this purpose it was right to remain as concentrated as possible.—You evidently understood this, and your forward movement by bounds was properly thought out and executed.—I am specially pleased with your order to the patrols to rejoin you at the point they started from.—As regards your fight in the wood, your sections advanced in extended order.—I think this was a mistake.—In this

\* “The Squadron Leader orders the opening of fire, subject to such orders as he may receive from the regimental commander; issues general instructions as to the targets and the distribution of the fire, and observes the effect. In other respects he leaves fire control to the Troop Leaders, and interferes only when he desires to combine the fire effect of several troops at a certain moment or over a certain space, or if he observes circumstances which have escaped the Troop Leader’s notice. During the fight he will see to the timely replenishment of ammunition.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 285.

formation they are difficult to handle.—You should have kept them upon both sides of the road in single file; you would thus have been able to manœuvre more easily.

In conclusion, the little skirmish on the outskirts of the wood against superior numbers was ingenious and quite successful.—The right idea seems to have been grasped at last.—THE DIRECTOR.

When halted you may send out patrols and order them to rejoin at the next halt, but it is a difficult business.—What very generally happens is that the patrols lose themselves and fail to turn up again.—THE MAJOR.

With regard to marching and fighting in forests. Most woods are impracticable for cavalry, which is therefore, to a great extent, restricted to the roads. In circumstances similar to those of this Problem, dismounted action is a necessity, and must be carried out in accordance with the principles which govern an infantry attack.

A battalion advances through trees upon an enemy in the following manner.—The two first companies deploy to the right and left of the road by sections,—each section in single file.—The third and fourth companies march one on each side of the road in rear of numbers one and two, in similar order, but further extended, and never directly behind those in front.—In a wood the arrival of even friendly troops in rear may create a panic.—The march is directed unhesitatingly upon the enemy, who, on

being encountered, is attacked with the bayonet. As you were without bayonets, I think you should have used your lances.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

### PROBLEM J (*continued*).

*Troop Scheme*.—Lieut. C : Detachments in first-line protection and forwarding of information.

*General Idea*.—See Problem I.

*Special Idea* (2.30 p.m.).—The previous scheme continued.—Lieut. D's troop is at Buloyer.

*Execution*.—This troop has just taken two prisoners.—They assert that a hostile cavalry regiment which left Saint Germain to-day at 11 a.m., is marching on Trappes via Saint-Nom-la-Bretèche. I forward the report at once to the O.C. cavalry by two despatch riders.\*—I order them to follow the Dampierre road, (that taken by the troops) —pace, "fast."—I also send the information to the neighbouring detachments on my left.—Order to the despatch rider : "Direction—the woods. March with your back to the sun, and follow the line indicated by your own shadow till you reach the main Trappes-Rambouillet road. You must inquire whether the troop has passed that way.—Ride 'fast,' and remain with the troop after delivering your

\* "It will often be advisable for despatch riders to work in pairs. Confidence is greatly increased by companionship. Important information must be sent in duplicate by different routes. . . ."  
—*Cavalry Training*, p. 265.



despatches.”—I intend to go to Voisins-le-Breton-neux, where I shall make use of the telegraph.\*

*First Bound.*—Northern extremity of the Garenne wood.—I take the necessary steps to hold the defile.—I march parallel to the road from Buloyer to point 131, where the main body of the troop gains the road.—It trots along the southern fringe of the wood, while No. 1 Section (Sergeant Y) crosses it by the Brouessy-Voisins path, and wheels inwards ahead of me towards the upper end of the defile at the gallop.

*Third Incident* (3 p.m.).—A hostile cavalry patrol of eight men, which was at the southern exit from the defile on the Dampierre road is trapped.—LIEUT. C.

*Criticisms.*—The despatch sent to the O.C. cavalry by the Dampierre road will reach him.—The fate of your message to the detachment on the Trappes-Rambouillet road is a matter for speculation.†

\* “Information may be gained by personal observation of the enemy, by questioning the inhabitants, prisoners, and others, or by tapping telegraph wires, taking letters and newspapers from post-offices. . . .”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 263.

† “An officer carrying out a reconnaissance has to rely solely upon his despatch riders for the transmission of his reports. The telegraph is not always to be trusted, and is only available in a friendly country.—Even seeing is not the slightest use unless the information can be sent back, nor is this of any value if it is incomplete.—An officer on reconnaissance must be constantly thinking how he can best forward his despatches.—During an advance, therefore, he should point out to his men the salient features of the road to be followed on the return journey. He must make use of every kind of device to transmit his messages

Information obtained from a wayfarer is unreliable. If your despatch rider, on his arrival, finds nobody on the road, he will certainly be puzzled.—I may remind you of a very applicable paragraph in our Regulations, in which it is laid down that “Detachments should indicate their line of march by the employment of conventional signs agreed upon beforehand, and left at intervals along the route followed.”—Your order should have been: “On reaching the Trappes-Rambouillet road you will look out for such and such a sign.—If you find none, turn to the left and make for Rambouillet. Should you discover any, however, you will know that the troop has gone on,—turn to the right, therefore, and follow it up.”

*Third Incident.*—I am extremely pleased with the way you manœuvred for the possession of the Garenne defile.—Your decision showed no sign of weakness or hesitation.—You had no intention of waiting either to ascertain whether the enemy was there or to find out his dispositions, so that you might conform to them.—You manœuvred first, and your will had to be reckoned with in the subsequent events.—I agree. THE DIRECTOR.

*Initialed,* The Major.

With regard to the transmission of information,

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—by duplicating the despatch riders, forwarding missives by men on horseback or by driven vehicles, bicycles, motor-cycles, etc. He must always lead his reconnaissance with his weather eye upon the safe carriage of his information.”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

detachments in first-line protection should form an unbroken chain.\*—General dispositions should be taken so as to regulate them.—It would have been specially interesting if the operation orders had mentioned a given transverse line from which the detachments were to start at a particular time.—The latter would thus have known at what points they could be certain of gaining touch with the other troops.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

PROBLEM J (*continued*).

*Troop Scheme*.—Sergeant V : Detachments in first-line protection—(1) in villages ; (2) in a case of enforced dispersion.

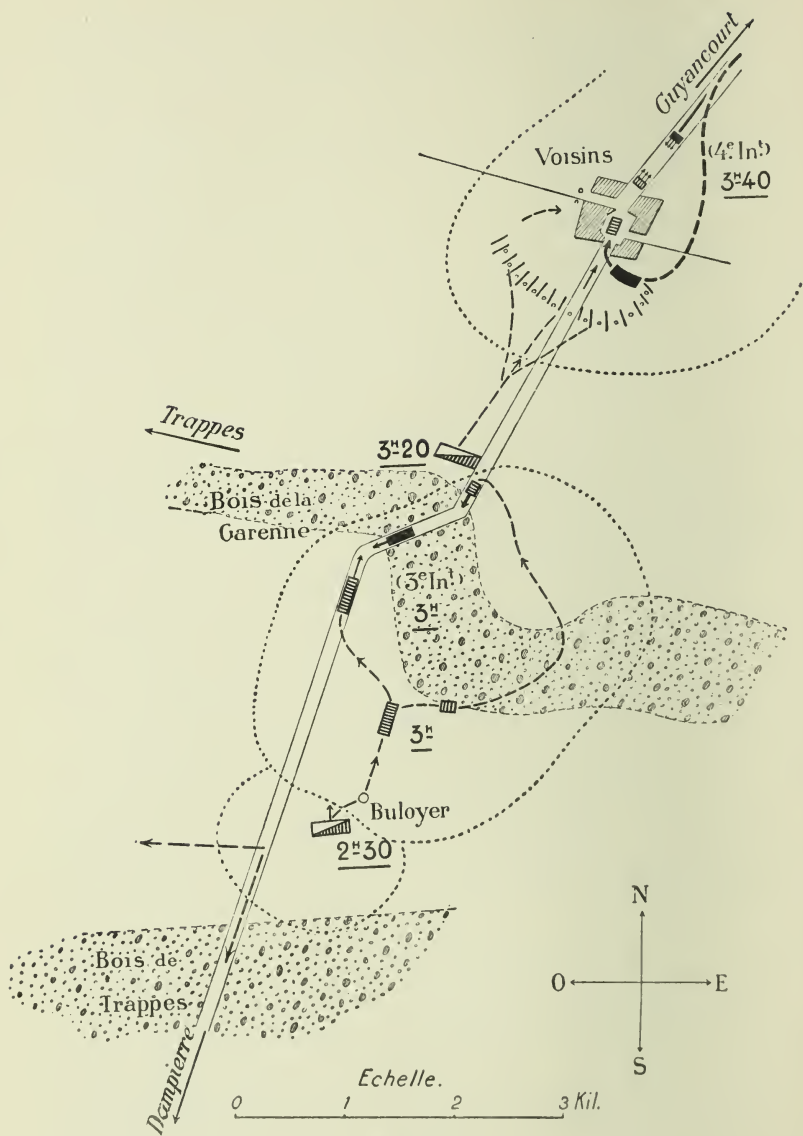
*General Idea*.—See Problem I.

*Special Idea* (3.20 p.m.).—The troop is assembled at the northern boundary of the Garenne wood close to the main road.—The scheme resumed.

*Execution*.—I intend to enter the village by a “surprise” from several directions simultaneously.—Order : “Extend !—Reassemble at Voisins-le-Bretonneux.—The square facing the church.”—

\* “During the Russo-Japanese War Lieutenant Kriezianowski had managed to reach the rear of the Japanese Army, where he gained information of General Nogi’s turning movement during the Battle of Mukden. He found it extremely difficult to return. To insure the safe transmission of his reports, he therefore rode back several times with his dispatch riders for many miles until they reached familiar ground. His information was not believed.—He rode three English thoroughbreds.”—CAPITAINE LOIR : *Cavalerie*.

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MAP 13.

The village is deserted.—The troop assembles in the square.—Vedettes: One, on the Guyancourt road, near the furthestmost houses; another on the Montigny road at the extreme end of the village.—“No. 1 Section: Dismounted action!—Barricade the road.”—The troop dismounts.—I go to the Post Office, seize the correspondence and send off telegraphic messages to the O.C. cavalry at Dampierre and Cernay-la-Ville.—I send for the Mayor, and obtain from him all statistical information. . . .\*

*Fourth Incident* (3.40 p.m.).—Shots are heard in the direction of the barricade on the Guyancourt road.—A scout gallops in and gives the alarm. The troop hastily mounts.—Two hostile troops charge us from the south and west.—My troop is scattered in all directions.—I make off with one section in the direction of Montigny, cross the Garenne plantations, and make for the Trappes woods, where I am lucky enough to be able in the darkness to assemble my troop.—SERGEANT V.

*Criticism.*—You entered Voisins in extended order.—This may be admissible, but you should have worked by sections, each of them, if you prefer it, in extended order, but with a definite line

\* In most villages in France the minor administrative functions are carried out by a personage bearing the title of Mayor. Not unusually he is a farmer, and he it is who is responsible for the arrangement of billets, forage, etc.—In Belgium similar functions are carried out by the Communal Secretary of each village, who is responsible for detailed statistics of crops, forage, horses, cattle, etc.—TRANSLATOR.



of advance.—Your order should have been: “Direction : Voisins,—extend.—No. 1 Section, direction : The main road ;—No. 2 Section, to the right ;—No. 3 Section, to the left.—Rally in the square facing the church.”—You approached from the direction from which you were expected.—I should have preferred to appear from the opposite side : in this case from the north, from the direction of Guyancourt.—I should have galloped with the whole troop right through the village, and then returned to the square and taken ~~the~~ hostages.\*—After the first moments of panic, as a Frenchman and a gentleman, I should have endeavoured to reassure the inhabitants.—I should have first sent for the Mayor, and then set to work.

*Fourth Incident.*—You took up your position within the village.—This was an unpardonable error. The position of cavalry should never be, in any circumstances, inside a town or village.—You paid the penalty.—What you should have done was to have left a few men at the barricade on the Guyancourt road and assembled your troop, still mounted, to the south, outside, but close to the town.—Take the offensive on every occasion, never abandon it, and make your dispositions accordingly.—THE DIRECTOR.

The troop, forcibly dispersed, rallied instinc-

\* Our own regulations only mention hostages in the case of requisitions, when “one or two hostages will be taken if necessary.”—TRANSLATOR.

tively on the northern boundary of the Trappes Woods road, where it had previously halted.\*—It is quite clear this will invariably be the case unless contrary orders are given out beforehand.—THE MAJOR.

*Initialed*, The Lieut.-Colonel.

No. 11.

*Troop Scheme*.—Escort to a Convoy.

*Director*.—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part*.—The Troop Officers.

*Rendezvous*.—Villepreux, February<sup>14</sup>, 1 p.m.

PROBLEM K.

*General Idea*.—Paris invested, 1870. A half regiment has levied a war contribution at Villepreux, and is marching on Rennemoulins before going to Saint Cyr to rejoin the main body.—The enemy's scouts are reported from Trappes and Bois d'Arcy.

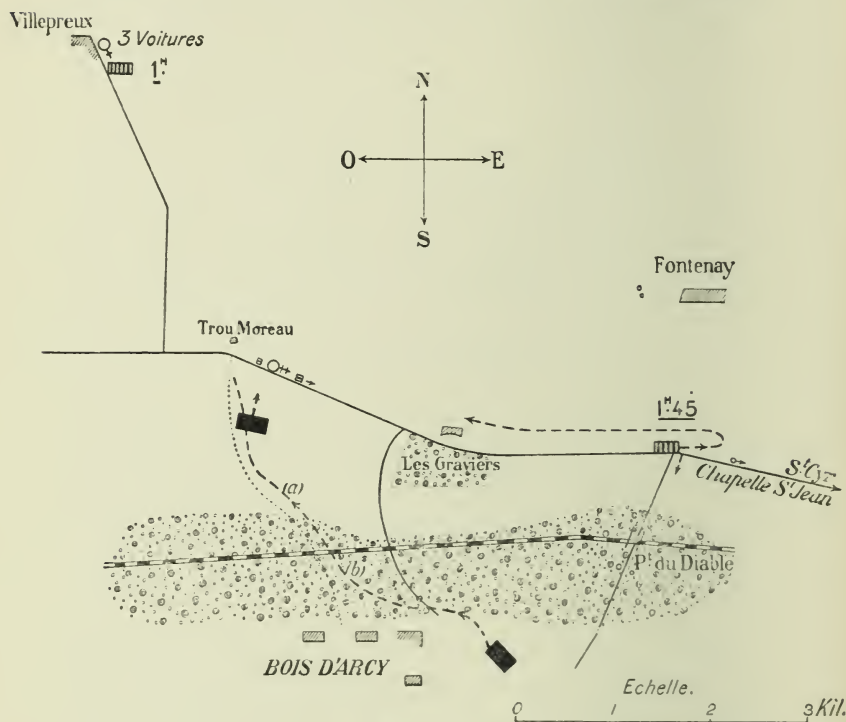
*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—At Villepreux.—Verbal order by the O.C. half regiment to Lieut. A: "These three waggons laden with oats are required at Saint Cyr.—Escort them with your troop.—A hostile troop is reported in the vicinity of the Bois d'Arcy woods."—THE DIRECTOR.

\* "If a patrol is cut off by the enemy its members will, . . . if necessary, scatter and rally again at the last halting-place, if no other place has previously been chosen."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 262.

*Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. A : Escort to a convoy.

*Execution.*—The hostile troop reported from Bois d'Arcy can only reach the Trou-Moreau—



MAP 14.

Chapelle-Saint-Jean road from two directions: (1) The bridle path through the wood which comes out opposite Trou-Moreau; (2) or the Bois d'Arcy-Fontenay road.—It is not my intention to move far from the waggons, and I shall protect them by holding these two points ahead.—I give the order

therefore—No. 3 Section: “Escort to waggons,—ride with them, and take the Trou-Moreau—Chapelle-Saint-Jean road to Saint Cyr.”—With the remainder of the troop I gallop to Trou-Moreau, and halt at the back of the farm.—I then send a couple of men to the railway-crossing at Bois d’Arcy, and a couple more towards Fontenay.—The waggons are coming along.—I gallop to Chapelle-Saint-Jean, where I halt and send two more men to Pont-du-Diable.

*Incident* (1.45 p.m.).—I am at Chapelle-Saint-Jean, and hear shots from the direction of Les Gravières.—My convoy is being attacked from the rear.—I turn about, and gallop towards Trou-Moreau.—My third section has been dispersed. I am intercepted by the hostile troop, and am thus prevented from recapturing the waggons.—  
LIEUT. A.

*Criticism.*—Your action proves you intended to fight close to your waggons.—This being so, it would have been better to stay with them.—Your plan is open to criticism.\*—You could not have

\* “In war against a civilized foe the escort should not be distributed along the length of a convoy.—After small advanced and rear guards have been provided for, and sufficient men have been posted along it to insure order and easy communication, the main body of the escort should move with the usual precautions and in a handy formation on the flank of the convoy from which attack is anticipated.”—*Field Service Regulations*, p. 214.

“In dealing with coerced, and possibly disaffected, drivers

## 78 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

prevented the enemy from shooting down your horses, etc.—What ought you to have done?—Made for the Pont-au-Diable via La Chapelle, and watched the wood (Bois d'Arcy).—Don't be afraid to show yourself.—As soon as you had located the hostile troop you should have taken your dispositions for manœuvring.—You would have held the enemy in check, and your convoy would have passed by in safety.—The enemy took the bridle-path (*a-b*) ; you should have followed him up.—Had you done this you could have been quite certain you would have stopped any inclination on his part to advance any closer to the convoy.—THE DIRECTOR.

The dispositions taken by Lieut. A implied danger ahead.—As a matter of fact, the enemy was on his right flank ;\* he should have held the approaches on that side further to the south.—THE MAJOR.

I fully endorse the criticism of the Director.—The main object was to get the enemy away from the convoy.—To do this you ought not to have waited

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with their own horses, nothing but the most uncompromising severity of the officers, N.C.O's, and men appointed to look after the convoy, can maintain the order which is so vitally important. . . . The detachments thrown out in the direction of the enemy . . . must be exceptionally strong, and the distance between them and the convoy must, as a rule, be greater than that of an ordinary advanced or flank guard from its main body."—COLONEL GRIEPENKERL: *Letters on Applied Tactics*.

\* "For every engagement the flanks were watched with unremitting vigilance."—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.



for him to come up to you. You should have started off to meet him.

Find out what you can, but in any case go on as far as possible in the direction of the enemy and fight him ;—or, if not, at least hold him at bay till the convoy has passed by in safety.

A convoy must be defended on the same principle as a frontier in time of war, by a raid into the enemy's country, and not merely by waiting for him in your own.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

## No. 12.

*Troop Scheme.*—Destruction of a railway.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (February 20, 1 p.m.).—Exit from Saint Cyr.—Bois d'Arcy and Trappes cross-roads.

## PROBLEM L.

*General Idea.*—Paris besieged, 1870.—A body of cavalry holding Versailles has thrown out detachments to the south to make requisitions and to destroy the permanent way.—One of these detachments is operating towards Saint Cyr.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The detachment is at the south-western exit from Saint Cyr.—Order from the C.O. to Lieut. A :—"I am going to Bois d'Arcy, where I intend to levy a contribution. I shall remain there for an hour and a half at the

## 80 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

outside.—Take your troop, and do your utmost to destroy the railway and station at Trappes.—Rejoin at Bois d'Arcy.—A strong troop of the enemy's cavalry is reported in the neighbourhood of Voisins-le-Bretonneux.—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Report of Scheme.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. B: Destruction of a railway.

*Execution.*—From Voisins the hostile troop can move upon Trappes from the south or through Montigny.—If, however, it follows either of these roads, it will have to advance in the open.—On the other hand, it may advance through Trappes wood; but this would be more difficult.—It is my intention, after reconnoitring Trappes, to leave the pioneers at the station, which they will at once proceed to destroy, protected by the whole of my troop assembled close to the Trappes woods.

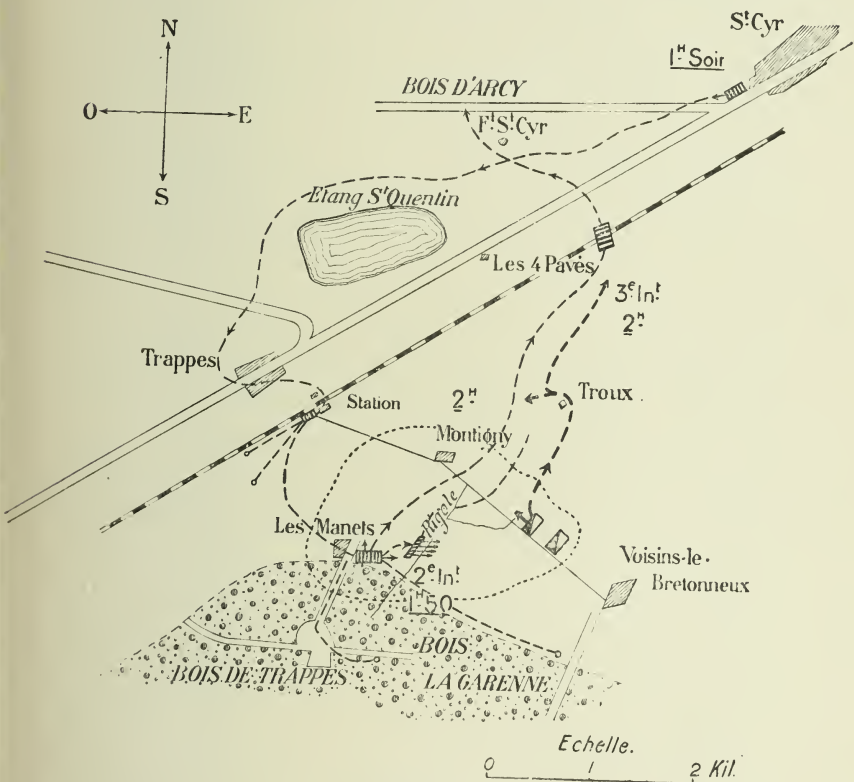
*Itinerary of Troop.*—Saint Cyr,—a stretch of the Saint Cyr road west of the Saint Quentin road, pond  
—Trappes.

Order to Corporal A: Two men in advanced guard.

I enter Trappes from the north, gallop through the village, and take four hostages.—I drop the pioneers and six men of No. 1 Section at the station, then ride on with the remainder of the troop to the northern extremity of the Trappes wood near Les Manets.—I order out one patrol towards Montigny

to watch in the direction of Voisins, and another along the northern fringe of the Garenne wood.

*First Incident (1.40 p.m.).*—A hostile troop from Voisins is moving upon Montigny.—I follow the



MAP 15.

railway embankment, and charge it in flank just as it arrives south of the aqueduct.—It falls back on Voisins.

*Second Incident (1.50 p.m.).*—Two hostile troops come out from Voisins towards Montigny.—I make

## 82 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

for the aqueduct.—Dismounted action.—The enemy retires northwards in the direction of Troux.—The troop mounts, and we move to the north of Montigny.

*Third Incident* (2 p.m.).—The two hostile troops intend, apparently, to advance upon me.—I retire along the Quatre-Pavés—Bois d'Arcy road pursued by superior numbers.

*Fourth Incident* (2.15 p.m.).—The destruction of the railway has been carried out.—The pioneers with the third section rejoin me at Bois d'Arcy.—  
LIEUT. B.

*Criticism.*—The line by which you marched afforded cover.—You held Trappes; securing yourself against treachery from the inhabitants by taking hostages.—You made straight for the enemy, and manœuvred so as to prevent him from intervening where the destruction of the line was taking place.—This, I think, was quite right. You took up an offensive position on the enemy's flank;—with this also I certainly agree.—  
THE DIRECTOR.

The special situation created by the Director affords a valuable lesson.—It placed the troop in a difficult position, and Lieut. B did very well. I quite approve of his having taken hostages at Trappes.—Generally speaking, when engaged in destructive work without assistance a troop must carry out its mission by a surprise.—Orders given to a troop should therefore mention a section and

not a particular spot where the demolition is to be undertaken.\*—THE MAJOR.

*Initialed*, The Lieut.-Colonel.

## No. 13.

*Troop Scheme*.—Levy of a requisition.†

*Director*.—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part*.—The Troop Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (February 27, 1 p.m.).—Les Loges-en-Josas.

## PROBLEM M.

*General Idea*.—Paris besieged, 1870. A half regiment from Versailles, where the main body of

\* "In no circumstance should cavalry be given a roving commission. . . . A raid should only be undertaken for a definite and adequate purpose; the commander of a raiding force should therefore be given a definite objective."

"When a raid on an important railway-line is in question, it must be remembered that the line in all probability will be strongly guarded at all vulnerable points, . . . and that little damage is done by removing a few sleepers or rails. . . ."—

*Cavalry Training*, p. 244.

† The following is an example of a requisition :

### " NOTICE.

" January 23, 1871, 4 p.m.

NANCY.

"The Prefect of the Meurthe begs to inform the Mayor of Nancy that 500 workmen in the employment of the Municipality are required to be at the railway-station to-morrow, the 24th January, at 12 noon.—In case of failure to carry out this order, the surveyor first, and a certain number of workmen afterwards, will be seized and shot."—DE CESSAC: *Guide Particulier de l'Officier en Campagne*.



the cavalry has halted, is carrying out a requisition in the district of Buc—Les Loges-en-Josas.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The half regiment is at Loges.—Order to Lieut. C's troop: "Go to Toussus-le-Noble and make a requisition for 500 oat rations. The half regiment will join you at 2.30 p.m.—A hostile troop is reported in the neighbourhood of Villiers-le-Bâcle."—THE DIRECTOR.

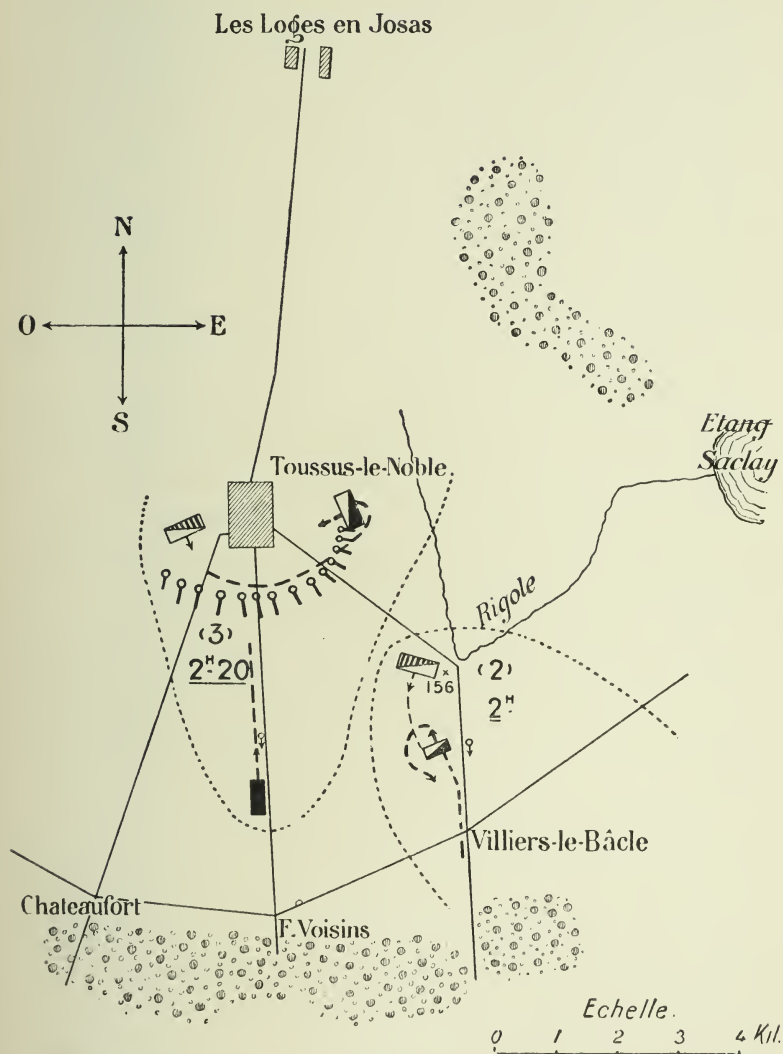
### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. C : Method of carrying out a requisition.

*Execution.*—It is my intention to move rapidly to Toussus-le-Noble, and leave Sergeant Y with a section—(executive group)—there.—With the remainder of my troop I shall then advance on Villiers in the direction of the hostile force and search for them.—I shall march therefore by the main road.—I detail Corporal A and four men as a reconnoitring patrol ahead and enter the village.

*First Incident* (1.30 p.m.).—A hostile cavalry patrol of some ten men dismounted opens fire upon us from a yard.—I am taken by surprise, and hastily turn about.

1.40 p.m.—The operation resumed.—I am master of the village.—I send for the Mayor and take three hostages.—The exits are held by No. 1 Section. Order to Sergeant Y, No. 1 Section: "Carry out



MAP 16.

the requisition.”\*—With the remainder of my troop I march on Villiers-le-Bâcle, and take up a position facing south-south-west at point 156 near the brook flowing from the pool of Sarclay, about three-quarters of a mile from Toussus.—The troop, still mounted, is concealed behind a hay-stack; a look-out man on the top watches the heights and their approaches from Villiers and Châteaufort.—A patrol to the west is watching the exits from Châteaufort in the direction of Voisins-le-Bretonneux.

*Second Incident* (2 p.m.).—I am concealed near point 156.—A body of fifteen hostile horsemen appears in sight from the direction of Villiers.—I move to meet them, but they turn about.—I send a patrol after them.—They disappear towards Châteaufort.—I move in closer to Toussus.

*Third Incident* (2.20 p.m.).—I am on the look-out towards the south and west, rather more than a hundred yards west of Toussus, close to a barricade opposite the furthestmost houses on the Châteaufort

\* “Surprise is an important factor in successful requisitioning, for not only does it decrease the opposition, but it also prevents the concealment or removal of supplies before the arrival of the troops. As soon as a requisitioning party reaches the town or village in which it intends to requisition, the commander of the escort should guard all the outlets, post sentries over places in which supplies are seen to exist, form a reserve of men in the town so as to be ready for any opposition from the inhabitants, and take one or two hostages if necessary. With the remainder of his force he should take up suitable positions outside the town or village and in the direction of the enemy.”

—*Cavalry Training*, p. 319.

road.—A hostile troop emerges from the lane leading from Voisins-le-Thuit farm.—I intend to let it approach within range of the barricade, and then charge it in flank or rear.—The hostile troop charges in extended order, and makes for the three approaches to the south of Toussus.—I charge in close order.—The enemy rallies to the east of Toussus.—There is no firing from the village.—Sergeant Y and his section have been disarmed by the villagers.—I am again charged, and my troop is dispersed.—LIEUT. B.

*Criticism.*—Your mission was to carry out a requisition in Toussus ; this should not have taken more than an hour and a half.—You took up your position about three-quarters of a mile south of the village in which the requisition was to be made. You received information as to the whereabouts of the enemy, and you made for him and kept him off.—The object of your mission meanwhile is being carried out without disturbance.—It would have made no difference even if a larger force had appeared.—You would have merely manœuvred in accordance with his strength ; that is all.—It is never a mistake to advance upon the enemy.\* On the other hand, it is absolutely fatal to wait for him to come up.—His appearance close to the village gave

\* “Napoleon, manœuvring between the allied armies, in variably attacked. His numerical inferiority never induced him to take up a position. Bar-sur-Aube, Craonne, Laon, Reims, St. Dizier are all offensive battles and all victories. But the war of

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inhabitants confidence.—Your mission was condemned to suffer all the after effects of your previous dispositions.—THE DIRECTOR.

The troop might have attempted to carry out its mission by a surprise—*i.e.*, by capturing the village,\* holding its exits, and clearing out at the first alarm.—THE MAJOR.

Quite so; but then the successful achievement of your mission would have depended upon outside circumstances and not upon your own will. A leader must never allow himself to be influenced by circumstances.—He must be trained to control them.—Once for all this cowardly doctrine of the eternal defensive must be abandoned. — As you

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1904-5 proves equally that modern armies can no longer safely follow the beaten track of other days. One superiority of the Japanese consisted in the fact that their army was not linked to the past by those old-world conventionalities which we dignify by the name of traditions.”—DE NÉGRIER.

\* “If the numerous cases which presented themselves in France during the German invasion are carefully examined, we must be struck by the perpetual recurrence of certain causes and effects.—Villages fell when severely bombarded by artillery for a long time, and they contrived to resist when attacks were made without the guns. Again, the exterior defences and the outskirts of a village sometimes fell, yet a prolonged defence was often continued within. The Germans entered Bazeilles without a fight. Seven hours elapsed, and virtually a whole army corps was engaged before they succeeded in forcing their passage out of the other end of the village.”—BRACKENBURY: *Field Works*.

Doubtless villages are strong in defence, but in cases similar to that of this scheme, unless cavalry avoids becoming heavily engaged, escape becomes impossible.—TRANSLATOR.



remained in the village, it was ten to one you would be captured.—The Director is right.—The best way to prevent your requisition being interrupted by the enemy's arrival was to arrange to engage him as far away as possible.—After all, in the open what do you risk?—At a garrison lecture some six years ago I heard a brilliant officer discussing the duties of cavalry in case of a war with Germany.—He argued that our divisions should not attempt to cross the frontier, as they would be quickly immobilized in the enemy's country owing to the lack of supplies!

Myths of this kind are now happily out of date.  
—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

#### NO. 14.

*Troop Scheme.*—Escort to guns.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (March 6, 1 p.m.).—The road from Versailles to La Minière at the point where it turns to the north across the plateau of Satory.

#### PROBLEM N.

*General Idea.*—A hostile force has taken up a position from Bois d'Arcy towards Bouviers.—An infantry division from Versailles is manœuvring offensively against it from La Minière, covered by the wooded valley of the Bièvre.—With the object of drawing the enemy on and fixing him in front, the

## 90 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

division detaches one battalion and a battery with a troop of cavalry as escort to the west of the plateau of Satory.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The battalion is just coming out on to the tableland at the Bois Robert cross-roads.—The battery with its escort is at this point.—Order from the O.C. Battalion to the Troop Leader: “The guns will move on ahead of the infantry and make for the extremity of the Bois Robert woods so as to command the ground towards Bois d’Arcy.—Act accordingly.”—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. D: Escort to Artillery.

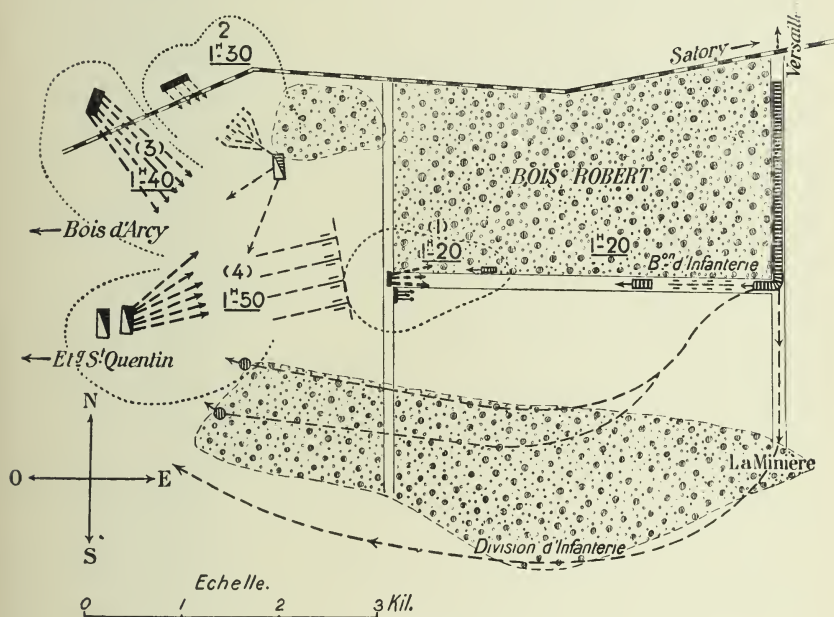
*Execution* (1 p.m.).—I am with the guns.—I receive my orders from the Battery Commander. He is about to trot down the road to take up a position inside the walls enclosing the wood of Bois Robert.—He intends to ride ahead of his battery.—Order to the troop, Sergeant Y with No. 1 Section: “Gallop to the exit from Bois Robert and take up a position, dismounted.—Send a patrol along the fringe of the Bièvre wood.—I shall march with my troop ahead of, and close to, the battery.”

I precede the artillery, which starts off at the trot.

*First Incident* (1.20 p.m.).—Sergeant Y’s section is repulsed at the boundary of Bois Robert by a strong hostile patrol, which has dismounted on the other side of the wall and opened fire upon the

column.—I gallop forward through the wood, and 50 yards from the exit order: “Dismounted action.” The hostile troop mounts and disappears.

The troop, mounted, takes up a position about 550 yards north of the exit from Bois Robert.—The guns move out.



MAP 17.

*Second Incident* (1.30 p.m.).—A few of the enemy’s horsemen have dismounted on the further side of the railway embankment, and fire upon the guns as they leave the cover of the wood.—I charge in extended order.

*Third Incident* (1.40 p.m.).—The artillery has unlimbered to the west of the exit from Bois

## 92 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

Robert.—It opens fire in the direction of the pool of Saint Quentin.—The whole troop remains mounted at the western salient of the Satory wood. *of the artillery*  
A hostile troop appears on the right, <sup>about</sup> half a mile away; it is in extended order, and advances on the flank of the guns at an oblique angle. I charge in close order.

*Fourth Incident* (1.50 p.m.)—The artillery is firing by progressive bursts.—Two hostile troops appear within the zone of fire.—I charge in extended order;—there is a skirmish.—End of exercise.—  
LIEUT. D.

*Criticism 1.*—You sent a section to hold the exit from Bois Robert to cover the approach of your guns; it was not sufficient.—You should have galloped there with the whole of your troop. What, in the name of common sense, did you expect to do by remaining with the guns?

*Criticism 2.*—You expected to fight, and rightly so; but in this case it was your duty to prevent your guns coming under fire.—You ought, therefore, to have sent out reconnaissances in every direction.—Your orders should have been: “No. 1 Section reconnoitre to the front and to the west of the exit from Bois Robert.”

*Criticism 3.*—Your artillery is in action; it is threatened on its flank by one of the enemy's sections in extended order.—You ride it down without interrupting the fire;—good.

*Criticism 4.*—Your guns are firing, and their

help must be urgently needed, or they would not fire progressive bursts.—They are suddenly threatened by a force in extended order advancing within the zone of fire.—Your battalion is approaching; there was no necessity for your guns to limber up in face of such an attack.—You threw yourself in front of the hostile cavalry, and thus masked the fire of your own guns.\*—I think that was a mistake; you should have allowed the enemy to ride right up to, and even through, your guns. You could then have fallen upon him in flank and driven him back.—When charged, gunners take cover underneath their guns.—THE DIRECTOR.

*Third Incident.*—I presume the hostile troop appeared in extended order from the left.—You rode to meet it, but had to move across the line of fire of your own guns.—The position of the escort

\* “At that moment our infantry was falling back down a slope after an abortive attack.—It was followed by a murderous hail of chassepot and mitrailleuse bullets. Everybody realized it was impossible to reach the cover of the woods below them.

“Absolutely worn out and resigned to their fate, the whole of our infantry force was dragging itself slowly towards the trees when suddenly the hail of fire ceased. Full of amazement, there was a general halt. How was it they came to be saved from what seemed certain death? They owed their salvation to the French cuirassiers, who, as they pushed forward, had masked the fire of their own infantry and artillery.—To our troops the cuirassiers came as guardian angels, and their own safety being now assured they turned about as they stood, and taking deliberate aim at the authors of their salvation, soon swept them out of existence with a rapid and merciless fire.”—KRAFT: *Cavalry*.



is in rear of the battery.\*—It is thus concealed by the guns, and can advance in any direction upon the enemy without masking their own fire action.—

THE MAJOR.

There is considerable truth in this criticism ; but while remedying one evil you only create a worse. You would always arrive too late.—You allowed the enemy to carry out his attack as it best suited him. You did nothing except to counteract his movements.—A straightforward attack would have been far better. A troop ahead should watch the threatening shadows and control coming events.—Instead of voluntarily remaining as a defensive flank, it should have taken the offensive.—It is the far preferable solution.—After all, if a troop is forced to cross the line of fire, it is to be presumed that the gunners will control it so that their own comrades shall not be shot down.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

## No. 15.

*Troop Scheme.*—Protection of Billets.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Officers and N.C.O's, including Corporals.

\* The principal duties of the escort are :

“1. To warn the artillery commander of all attempts of the enemy to approach within effective rifle range of the guns or ammunition waggons.

“2. To keep hostile bodies beyond effective rifle range of the guns.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 303.

*Rendezvous* (March 14, 2 p.m.).—Fontenay-le-Fleury.

*General Idea*.—An Infantry Brigade from the south is billeted in Saint Cyr and its immediate vicinity.—The half regiment attached to it is to billet at Rennemoulins.—The enemy is believed to be at Saint Germain and to its north.—The country folk are unfriendly.

*Special Idea*.—At 4 p.m. the half regiment is close to Fontenay-le-Fleury, behind the crest line towards point 107.—It has placed outposts.—Order from the O.C. to Lieut. A: “Move on ahead to Rennemoulins, and there prepare billets for the half regiment.—You will take your troop in addition to the billeting party.—The neighbourhood is insecure.—A hostile troop has been seen near Saint-Nom-la-Bretèche.”—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme*.—Lieut. A: Protection of billets.

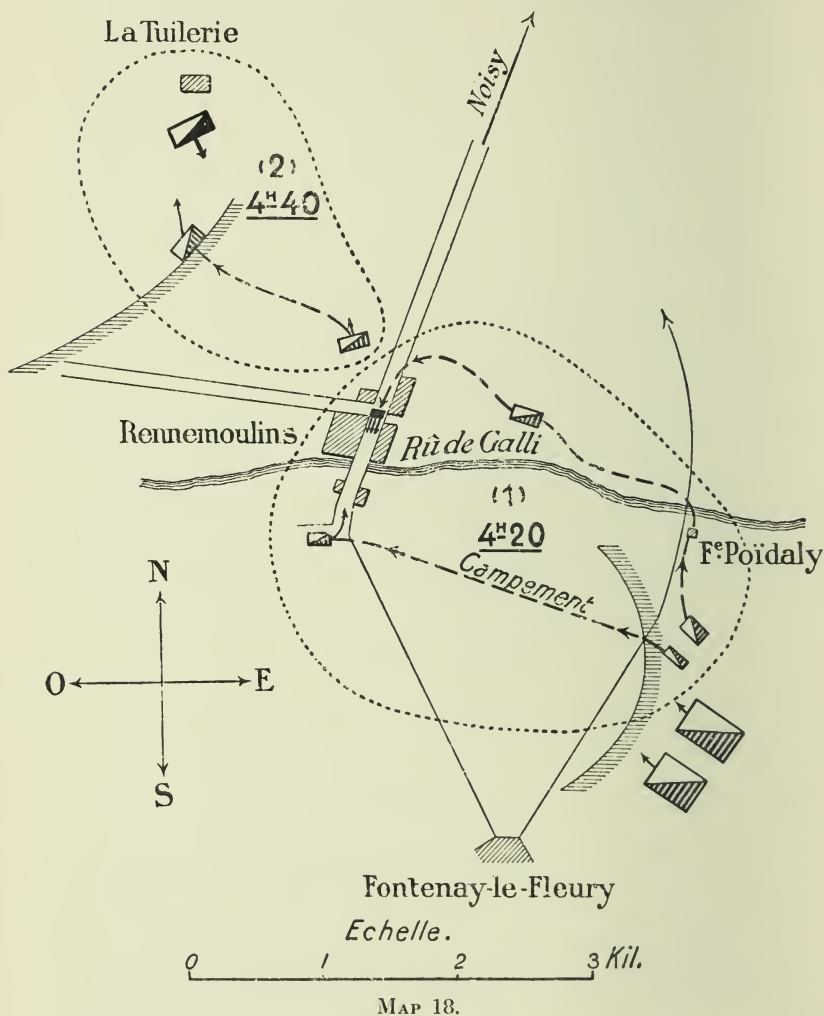
### PROBLEM O.

*Execution* (4 p.m.). — I assemble my detachment.—A corporal from each troop is attached to the billeting party.\*—It is my intention at the outset to seize Rennemoulins by a surprise

\* “A regimental billeting party should, if possible, consist of an officer or N.C.O. and one rank and file from each company, etc., for every unit concerned.”—*Field Service Regulations*, p. 73.

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placing it between the billeting party—demonstration group,—and my troop,—manœuvring group.



I give the order, therefore, to Q.M.S. X: "Advance with the billeting party along the road from Fon-

tenay to Rennemoulins.—Don't mind showing yourself; regulate your pace by me."

I gallop with the troop to the farm at Poidaly, where I turn ~~down~~<sup>off</sup> towards Rennemoulins, and follow the right bank of the Rû de Galli.

*First Incident* (4.20 p.m.).—I am rather more than 300 yards away from Rennemoulins.—I hear a few shots fired from the village, which I enter at the gallop, following the northernmost streets.—I come upon a patrol of ten of the enemy's horse-men, dismounted, firing upon the billeting party which has taken cover behind a wall south of the Rû de Galli.

I order the three sections to secure at once the exits from the village:—(the first forward, to the right—the second in rear, to the left—the third to the right).—I then give instructions to the troop—(Sergeant Y): "Go<sup>by</sup> the Noisy road to the northern exit from the village."—The billeting party which has been sent for arrives.—I take a few hostages, and send for the Mayor.—Having divided the village up into areas, I leave the billeting party to settle the details and rejoin my troop.

*Second Incident* (4.40 p.m.).—I am with my troop near the Noisy road at the northern approach to Rennemoulins. — We are concealed behind a stack, on the top of which I have a lookout man in observation.—A hostile troop is reported advancing from the direction of the Tuilerie.—It halts to take observations.—I give the order to

gallop, moving slightly to my left so as to take advantage of the screen afforded by the summit of the ridge.—I emerge about 550 yards from the hostile troop and charge.—It turns hastily about.—I send a patrol in pursuit, and return to my first position. The billets are ready.—The half regiment enters the village and begins to settle down.—At 5.10 p.m. I am relieved.—LIEUT. A.

*Criticism.*—You treated Rennemoulins with suspicion.—All villages through which you are bound to pass should be so regarded.—You lost no time in sending out patrols—which might have warned the enemy of your arrival.—You manœuvred as if Rennemoulins were occupied, and thus managed to entrap the hostile force which had been unwise enough to halt there.—All the more to your credit.—Excellent!

Once master of Rennemoulins you leave it, so as to protect it from without.—The soundest doctrine.—THE DIRECTOR.

This was all good work.—As regards billeting, I wish to emphasize the advantage there is in sending a Corporal from each troop with the conventional billeting party.—It is the best plan to ensure order and rapidity in the distribution of the squadrons, and is permitted by the Regulations. You divided the village into areas yourself.—It would have saved time to have left this to the Squadron Q.M.S.—THE MAJOR.

1. During garrison manœuvres I intend to insist



upon the necessity of ascertaining the enemy's position by means of detachments thrown out ahead. You remained behind reserving yourself for some possible emergency.—But remember, you have but one policy—your own.—Be certain you have a clear conception of what it is.—When once defined, carry it out with daring, and the enemy will be compelled to conform to it.

2. In this scheme you had your Corporals with you.—This must be to their advantage, and is really a matter of paramount importance.—With a system of two years' service\* a nation stands in far greater need of a reliable staff with which to train her men.—We can depend upon our Sergeants, can we, to an equal extent, rely upon our Corporals? Sharing as they do the daily life and mental outlook of the men themselves, the latter require the most careful training and supervision.—Let them take part in these schemes in future at least once a week.—It will result in untold advantage.—It will not only unite them more closely to you, but to all their other officers.—Take them out with you; the men will feel a greater sense of their own responsibility, and think more highly of you. With a scheme such as this we have had to-day (to which a troop scheme can always be added), you will be certain in a short time to obtain a capable body of N.C.O's.—Beyond this, again, you will possess picked men.—They will soon realize

\* In France about to be restored to three.

## 100 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

this, and prove themselves your most reliable assistants.—On such a splendid foundation you can build an absolutely ideal squadron.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

### RECONNOITRING DETACHMENTS.

#### *Scouting.*

#### No. 16.

*Troop Scheme.*—A Reconnoitring detachment and a night halt.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers and N.C.O's, including Corporals.

*Rendezvous* (March 22, 2 p.m.).—Châteaufort.—The northern approach.

#### PROBLEM P.

*General Idea.*—A cavalry division from Chartres will move to-morrow morning, the 23rd, against a mass of hostile cavalry reported to the north, in the vicinity of Saint Germain.—On the 22nd the division, in addition to “officers’ patrols,” pushed forward detachments, the line of advance of which was to be parallel to the general advance of the division.

*Special Idea.*—The squadron scouts (Lieut. B), forming a reconnoitring detachment, left Chartres about 8 a.m.—They are following the

road from Limours to Châteaufort, Versailles, Rocquencourt, and Saint Germain.—At 4 p.m. the troop arrives in the neighbourhood of Châteaufort, where it prepares to spend the night.—THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Reconnoitring detachment and night halt.

*Execution* (4.10 p.m.).—I lead my troop towards the farm at Mérantais, somewhat to the west of Châteaufort and north of the defile.—I have searched Châteaufort and seized the correspondence at the Post Office.—I learn that the hostile cavalry (seven or eight regiments strong) has moved on towards Rocquencourt.—I send back word to the O.C. Division.—My horses are tired, and have not been fed since we started.—I decide to billet somewhere in the vicinity, and intend to move off again with the earliest streaks of dawn to resume my reconnaissance.—There are several roads in the neighbourhood of Châteaufort, and they are much frequented.—I shall not remain there.—The farm at Villaroy, about a mile to the <sup>north</sup>~~south~~, stands alone in the midst of the uplands, at some distance from the main roads.\*—I decide to spend the night there. I gallop with my men across the fields to the farm, and

\* “Halts for the night should be made in isolated woods or lonely farms, the inhabitants of which have been seized, and which the enemy’s patrols are not likely to visit.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 261.

immediately enter the out-buildings.—I give orders to barricade the exits, and warn the inmates that no one will be allowed to leave.—I stable the horses, then requisition the barn for oats and hay, and the dairy and larders for the men.—The farmer asks for a receipt.—I refuse it, so as to leave no trace of my journey.—I examine the farm, which, fortunately, has two exits.—The horses have covered forty-four miles at considerable speed.—I see that they are vigorously whiped and carefully groomed, and that their legs are fomented with warm water.—I order them about a gallon of water sweetened with sugar, and afterwards a feed of carrots and a barley-mash in addition to a half ration of hay. An hour later they are watered and given the remainder of their feed.—Their legs are then rubbed, and they are thoroughly groomed.—When the saddles are removed\* and the horses rugged, the men fully dressed will sleep by them. A sentry, relieved every hour, will watch the main exit.—All will be prepared to saddle up and clear off at the slightest warning.

*First Incident* (3 a.m.).—The sentry gives the alarm.—We distinctly hear the hammer of hoofs on the Loges-Toussus road.—I give the order to saddle up.

3.15<sup>a</sup> p.m.—We can distinguish the clatter of

\* “Only a small percentage of horses should be off-saddled at a time, and as soon as a horse has fed he should be bitted.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 261.

arms, etc., in the direction of the pool at Trou Salé.—The troop files out of the farm, and forms up along the west wall.

3.45 p.m.—The hostile cavalry move off in the direction of Châteaufort.—The noise grows fainter, and gradually dies away.—Our horses are again watered and fed ( $4\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of oats and  $4\frac{1}{2}$  lb. of hay). At early dawn I make for the Geneste wood.\*—  
LIEUT. B.

*Criticism.*—You went to the farm while it was still light, and were discovered.†—This probably accounted for the night alarm.—The safety of a detachment thrown out on a voyage of discovery, as it were, in an unknown country depends upon its powers of concealment.‡—You should have waited

\* “Unless it be necessary . . . to start extremely early, it is better for men and horses not to march until a good hour after daybreak, so that all may have had a good meal by daylight.”—WOLSELEY: *Soldier's Pocket-Book*.

† “Small reconnoitring parties should not rest all together in one place. If reconnoitring parties halt before darkness sets in, they should change their positions after dark; it will usually be safer to change the positions even when a halt is made after dark.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 261.

‡ “THE ZEPPELIN RECONNAISSANCE, JULY 26, 1870.—The reconnaissance had achieved its objective—Worth; the horses, however, were exhausted by the heat, and the men had had no food since early morning. With the intention of halting to give both men and horses a rest, Captain Zeppelin, [since so famous,] decided to go to Schirlenhof, a thwaite so hidden away in the forest he thought it unlikely any of the enemy would put in an appearance.

“Schirlenhof, situated at the lower end of a valley, consists of a dozen cottages and a small tavern with a yard at the back



till nightfall before going to the farm. Or you should have imitated the instinctive habit of a covey of partridges, which, having dispersed in every direction at dawn, suddenly assembles at some particular spot at sunset from every quarter of

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and a shed adjoining.—The foresters said they had seen no French patrols, but they treated the foreigners with an air of curiosity, and insolent provocation.—(Several made off in haste to search for French troops, and some of them happened to come across Lieutenant Chabot's advanced guard.)—Captain Zeppelin dismounted at the inn. The horses were stabled in the shed, and nose-bags put on.—This imprudence entailed more risk than the first (a mounted constable had been captured in the morning and allowed to go; this officer had informed the 12th Chasseurs—Lieutenant Chabot's regiment—of the whereabouts of the detachment). With the exception of one sentry at the door, all the men entered the tavern and began their meal.—Suddenly the gallop of horses was heard; the French Chasseurs were upon them.—There was a sharp fight, during which Captain Zeppelin made off on a French horse held by an old woman.—With the exception of its leader, the whole detachment was captured.

“This disaster was caused by two imprudences.—The first was to give the constable his freedom, although it was difficult to do otherwise; he could not be shot, and to have kept him with the detachment would have meant delay.—The second was far more reprehensible: it was more than an imprudence; it was a fatal blunder.—Had Zeppelin only fed his men and horses outside the village, as had been his previous practice, his reconnaissance would not have been captured, for his men were well mounted. He, however, had been so lucky before, that he relaxed his former vigilance. He and his men, moreover, were so morally and physically worn out they gave way to a natural desire for rest at the very moment when they should have been more than usually alert.”—GENERAL DE CHABOT; *Revue de Cavalerie*, 1904.

the compass. You should have dispersed your ~~four~~<sup>the</sup> ~~three~~ groups: one on Toussus, one on Voisins, a third towards the pool at Trou Salé; then at nightfall\* assembled at the farm at the gallop.—THE DIRECTOR.

*Concerning the care of horses, after a hard day and anticipating a further strain on the morrow—(1) Feeding.*—To the ordinary ration with an extra allowance of oats, add, if possible, a few handfuls of green-stuff or carrots according

\* “The Emperor is displeased with the manner in which the light cavalry has been carrying out its duties. General Gabrecht, commanding the light cavalry of the 1st Army Corps, was to have held a position on the flank of the army. He had placed no outposts, and his horses were unbridled. According to military law, such neglect of duty is punishable by death.

“The Emperor found a Corporal of the Guard in charge of a post near ~~Puma~~<sup>Pirna</sup> with his horses unbridled. His Majesty orders the Corporal to be degraded.

“Brigadier-General Bruno, who was in reconnaissance with 150 Westphalian Horse, instead of bivouacking and changing his position every evening, and instead of spending the night in some place where he could not have been seen before sunset, went to towns and villages in broad daylight. At Freyburg he simply billeted with all his horses in stables. As a result, he was surprised by 400 Austrians. The Emperor orders General Bruno to be suspended, and his conduct to be investigated by a commission.

“In forwarding this order to the Major-General, His Majesty wishes to emphasize the necessity for reconnaissances to take precautionary measures. Troops must be again warned never to spend the night in a town. They are to bivouac, and they must change their bivouacs after dark, so as to sleep three or four miles away from the position they occupied at sunset. This is the only way to avoid surprise.”—*Orders of Napoleon I.*

to the season.—Sugar is an excellent pick-me-up after hard muscular work.—It may be given (from 2 to 4 lbs.) either in water, or powdered and mixed with the oats.—Sugared water is mixed in the proportion of a quarter of a pound to the quart—*i.e.*, a pound to the gallon.—Taken in this way it is more easily assimilated. Many horses, however, if not used to it in this form, will refuse to drink it, whereas all will eat it with their oats.

(2) *Backs*.—The usual care must be taken after every march.—In addition, there are several methods of special treatment (unsaddling, immediately followed by massage, hand-rubbing, beating with the palms of the hand, or allowing the backs to dry with blankets on, etc.).—In a case like the present, I am personally a great believer first in washing and then thoroughly drying the backs.—Men working in pairs get the drying finished more quickly.

(3) *Legs*.—The following methods are recommended: Rub the legs with hot vinegar and water in equal portions, or massage with camphorated oil. Then bind with hot-water bandages and cover with flannel.—Or, again, adopt dry massage followed by flannel or wadded bandages.—Any of these courses, if properly carried out, are excellent; unfortunately they are rarely practicable in the field.

It is the sudden interruption of circulation after violent or prolonged exertion that is so injurious to the legs of horses.—The object of all these different

treatments is to prevent this sudden stoppage of circulation in the extremities.—I have found in practice similar results may be obtained if horses are quietly led up and down for half an hour after being groomed.—Even this may be dispensed with if only they can be led during the last part of a march. But it is necessary to resort to some one or other of the above methods if you have been moving quickly up to the last moment, as you were in this instance.—THE DIRECTOR.

You refused to give the farmer a receipt for his own property to which you helped yourself, under the somewhat plausible plea that you wished to leave no trace of your movements.—This is by no means permissible.—No French officer can ever countenance wrong-doing.—You must always give a receipt and sign it (“Lieutenant D, . . . Regiment”). It has really little importance so far as the main operations are concerned, and it gives no additional information, after all, beyond those which the inmates, or the farm hands, can disclose.—THE MAJOR.

1. In this scheme the squadron scouts formed a distinct unit under a separate officer.—It may be objected that you thus deprived the troops of some of their best men.—I am, nevertheless, quite of your opinion.—In a good troop every section is a capable patrol, and every unit an excellent vedette or despatch rider.—But scouts have more serious duties to perform.—Ever ready even to turn a forlorn

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hope to advantage, all scouts must be prepared to act as explorers with a taste for adventure.—Upon them we must place reliance against surprise attacks.\*—They must be keen on the trail, and as carriers of vital despatches must be able to find their way anywhere.—They must be fearless horsemen, capable, if necessary, of managing a difficult mount.—They must be excellent shots and strong swimmers.—Any reconnoitring mission can be entrusted to a body of well-trained scouts.—They will locate hostile “Officers’ patrols”; take prisoners, swim rivers, and carry out dangerous or desperate destructive work, as well as night attacks.—They will gain contact and keep it, and when the enemy is encountered, be found as a tactical unit either in his rear or upon his flank.—Neither their training nor their duties, however, can be thoroughly carried out, unless they form a separate unit under a specially selected officer.

2. The instructions of the O.C. Division ordered the reconnoitring detachments to be sent out parallel to his line of advance.—This is a point well worthy of attention.—Against a widely extended or a vir-

\* “Strategical, tactical, and protective reconnaissance is carried out by means of patrols or detachments, the movements of which depend upon whether the reconnaissance is strategical or tactical, or whether it is protective. In the former case their operations should be based on the movements of the enemy rather than on the immediate movements of the force from which they are detached. In the latter case their movements must be based almost entirely on those of the force whose safety it is their duty to secure.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 256.



tually immobile objective, such as a concentrated or mass formation of all arms, "Officers' patrols" have every advantage.—They can dispense both with time and space.—Against a mobile objective, however, such as a cavalry division, these reconnaissances generally fail.—An "Officer's patrol" which left Chartres to-day is already in the neighbourhood of Saint Germain.—It ascertains that a hostile cavalry division has left the town, and it sends back the information.—The hostile division is supposed to have gone south-west.—But what follows?—I have seldom known a reconnaissance entrusted solely to the orthodox "Officers' patrol" successful.—What are really required are co-operative reconnoitring detachments, consisting of at least a troop, to follow the roads parallel to the general line of advance on a front of some nine to twelve miles, but limited to the width of the zone of action.—It is by this method alone that reliable information can be forwarded in a required direction at all hours of the day or night.\*—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

### No. 17.

*Troop Scheme.*—Reconnoitring detachment in contact.

\* "If one could only be acquainted beforehand with the enemy's designs, it would always be possible to defeat him, even with an inferior force."—FREDERICK: *Military Instructions to His Generals*.

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*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Troop Officers and N.C.O's, including Corporals:

*Assembly* (Wednesday, March 27, 1 p.m.).—Saint Cyr to Marly road.—The Maintenon Gate.

### PROBLEM Q.

*General Idea.*—See Problem P.

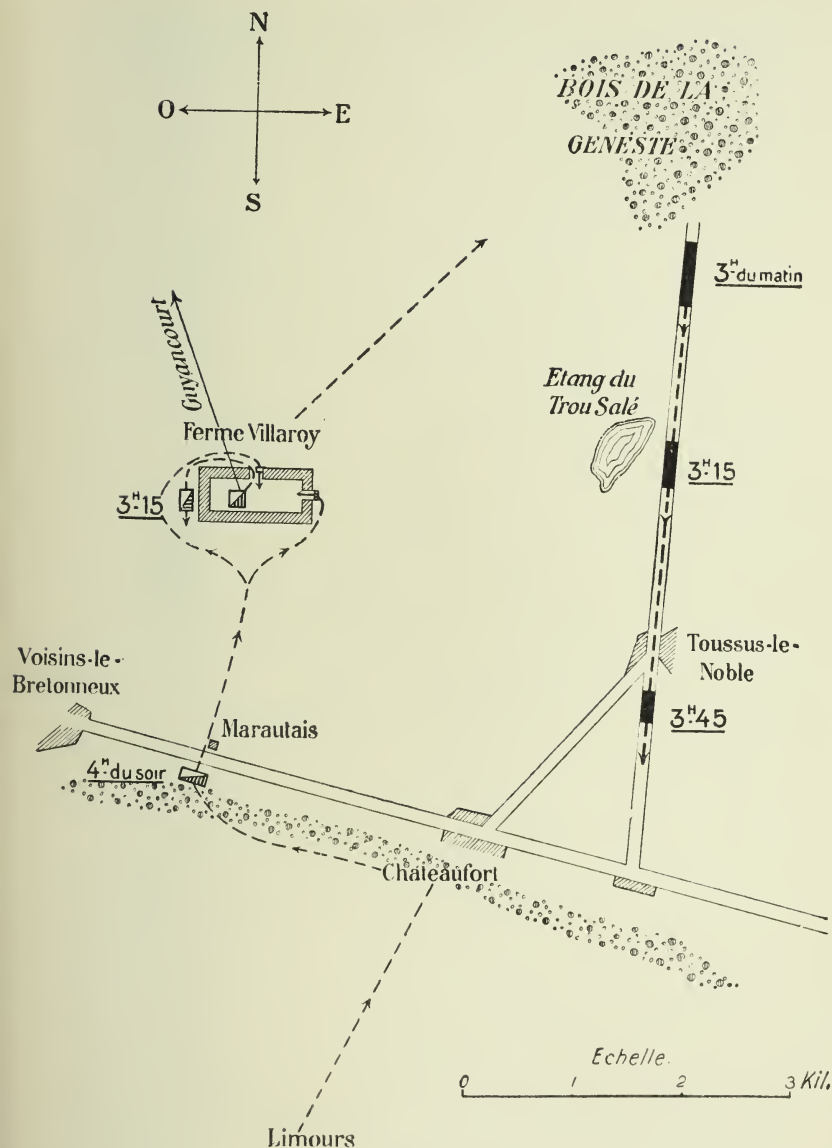
*Special Idea.*—The squadron scouts (Lieut. C), —reconnoitring detachment—are advancing by Limours — Châteaufort — Versailles — Marly — to Saint Germain.—They left the farm at Villaroy, where they spent the night, in the early morning. They have reconnoitred the neighbourhood of Versailles, and are aware that the enemy's cavalry is in the vicinity of Saint Germain.—They have had a few preliminary brushes with the enemy's scouts, and have made a couple of prisoners, whose uniforms were taken from them, and detained,\* etc.—At 1 p.m. they are in the Forest of Marly, near the Maintenon Gate.—The march on Marly resumed.—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. C: Reconnoitring detachment in contact.

*Execution* (1 p.m.).—I am with my detachment

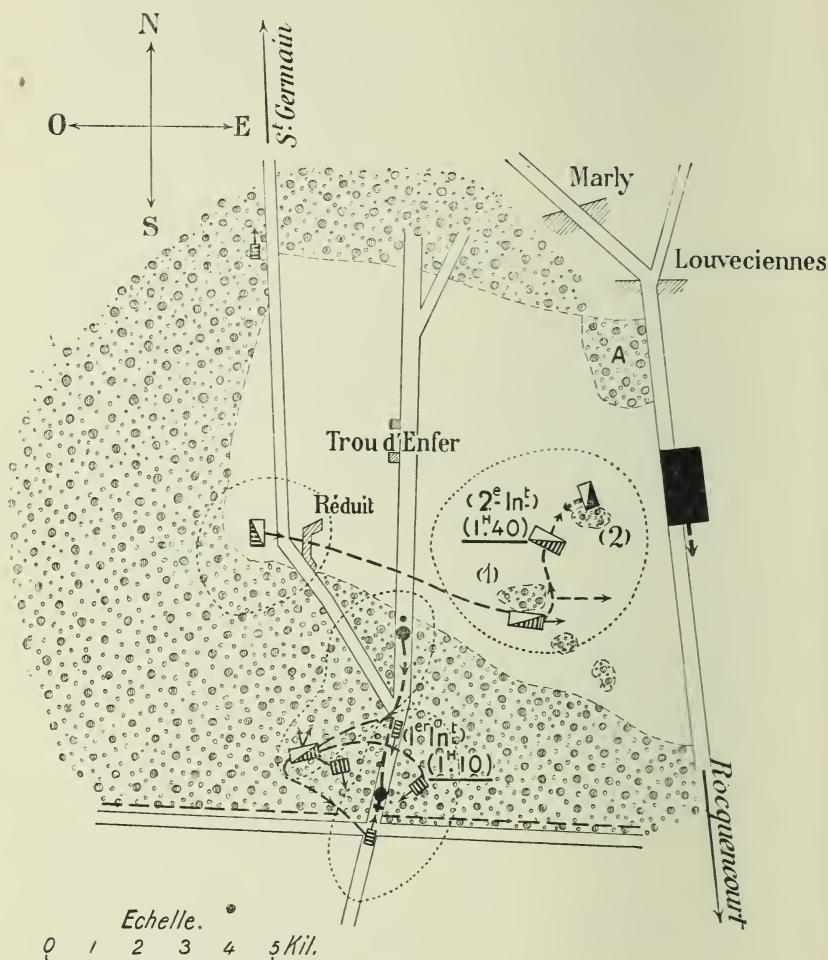
\* “Information as to the uniforms of the enemy, number of regiment on the buttons or badges, etc., may be of great use.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 263.



MAP 19

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in the forest, about 220 yards east of the Maintenon Gate.—A Corporal's patrol (A) from Rocquencourt



MAP 20.

and Château-Belair rejoins.—I advance through the trees by bounds till I reach the vicinity of Trou d'Enfer.

*First Incident* (1.10 p.m.).—As I am about to continue the advance I catch sight of an officer with five or six hostile horsemen trotting along the road leading to Trou d'Enfer.—Order to “Corporal X, Gallop to the Maintenon Gate!”—I allow the officer to pass, then extend my troop: Corporal B to the right, Corporal C to the left—the remainder with me.—We capture the patrol.—The officer is at once unhorsed and taken prisoner. I give the order for him to be searched, and take him with me.—As for the five men, we unsaddle their horses, cut the girths, etc.—The whole incident lasts only some eight or nine minutes.

The march resumed.—Direction: Towards Trou d'Enfer.

*First Incident* (1.30 p.m.).—The detachment is assembled in the wood close to the lodge at Trou d'Enfer.—A gamekeeper from Rocquencourt offers the information that a strong column of cavalry is now moving from Louveciennes on Rocquencourt and Versailles.—It is at the walk, and in column of sections.—I determine to reconnoitre. Order to Corporal A and two men: “Make for Marly; rally or forward information here!”—I take the remainder of my men at a single “bound” to the clump of trees, and halt.

*Second Incident* (1.40 p.m.).—I am in observation.—A hostile troop appears in sight, and halts behind the spinney, some 650 yards in front, and slightly to the left.—I give the order to the detach-



ment: "At the enemy, Charge!"—There is a skirmish, and I am obliged to retreat to the south.—With the exception of four men, we all rally near the Maintenon Gate, etc.—(End of scheme.)  
—LIEUT. C.

*Criticism.*—You had an important reconnoitring duty to perform, and as you were only two-thirds of a mile from the Rocquencourt road, you had almost attained your objective.—You attacked the enemy's troop and killed a few of his men, but you did not attain your object.—You should have launched your detachment under an N.C.O. against the hostile troop, which could have been outmanœuvred, while you made off with a couple of men to the Rocquencourt road.—You could all have rallied afterwards at the Maintenon Gate.  
—THE DIRECTOR.

You might have waited a few moments and then seized an opportunity to escape southwards. You would have avoided the enemy, and could then have dashed off to fulfil your task. Your detachment was not sent out to fight.—THE MAJOR.

By avoiding the enemy you left him free.—In the end he was bound to paralyze your movements, either by attacking you or intercepting your despatches. It was not your mission to fight, although one method of carrying it out was fighting.\*—In the

\* "As a rule, to carry out an effective reconnaissance, cavalry must be prepared to fight. . . ."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 257.

circumstances it was, perhaps, the best.—You might have charged in extended order on a broad front, then made for the road, with the wood (A) as a rallying-point; but in that case you would still have had the enemy in your rear.—The Director's solution, after all, is the best.

With regard to detachments of squadron scouts, in cases such as these they should consist of four or five scouts and a Corporal from each troop, a Sergeant, and an Officer.—This makes them about as strong as an average troop.—The war establishment of a squadron consists of 16 Corporals and 146 men. In peace, a troop in training consists of 12 files. This gives 100 sabres to the squadron, and renders it supple and handy.—If it could be arranged, a war establishment of five troops, one of which should consist of scouts, would certainly be preferable.—This troop would be entrusted with reconnaissances, or any other temporarily distant mission.—In this case the squadron would be left a tactical fighting unit at its full strength.

#### DIVISIONAL CAVALRY.\*

##### No. 18.

*Troop Scheme.*—

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

\* An episode during the Battle of Rezonville :

“In order to cover the march of the 38th Infantry Brigade, the left flank of which left much to be desired, Brandenbourg's Cavalry Brigade was ordered with five squadrons and a battery

## 116 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

*Taking Part.*—The Officers and N.C.O's, including the Corporals.

*Rendezvous* (Thursday, April 11, 1 p.m.).—Western exit from Saint Cyr.—The Trappes road.

### PROBLEM R.

*General Idea.*—An infantry brigade is marching from Saint Cyr to Neauphle-le-Vieux.—It is covered by two squadrons less two troops acting as divisional cavalry.—A hostile force of all arms is reported to the west in the vicinity of Montfort-l'Amaury.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The head of the advanced guard is fast moving out of Saint Cyr.—A section, under the officer commanding the leading troop, is in advanced guard.—The remainder of the first troop

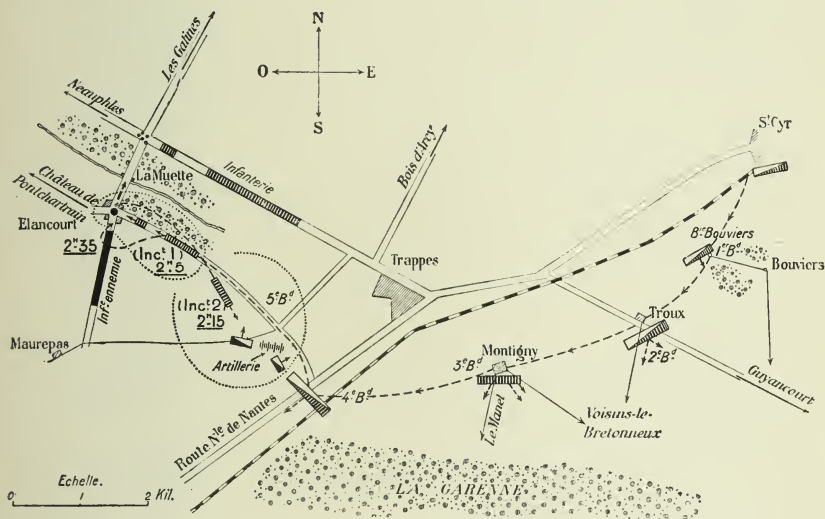
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to the west of Mars-la-Tour.—At the same time (4 p.m.), General Brandenburg received an order from the General commanding the 10th Army Corps to move in nearer to Vionville and support the artillery. Although this order had arrived late (it had been sent out at 3 p.m.) it was obeyed.

“As a result the 38th Brigade, having been denuded of its cavalry, and being thus forced to ignore everything so far as the enemy was concerned, continued its forward march until it stumbled against two hostile divisions, which annihilated it in a few moments.

“This episode proves that infantry cannot rely upon cavalry operating near it unless such cavalry is directly under the infantry control. It is liable to be called away for other duties, leaving the infantry front unprotected. If infantry is not to be surprised it must have its own complement of mounted men working for it alone as divisional cavalry.”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

and the second—(divisional cavalry)—are on the road at the western exit from Saint Cyr, under the immediate orders of the Column Commander. Order to Lieutenant C: “Left flank guard with both your troops.”—The distant protection is assured.—THE DIRECTOR.



MAP 21.

### Summary of Report.

*Troop Scheme.*—Divisional cavalry ensuring close protection of an infantry column on the march.

*Execution* (1 p.m.).—The two troops under my command, with the exception of the first section, are assembled on the road where it leaves Saint Cyr.—It is my intention to march parallel to the Trappes-Neauphle road, ahead of the column.

## 118 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

I shall move by successive bounds, and halt at the cross-roads.—Route: By the Battery of Bouviers, —Trous-Montigny—the Elancourt road;—thence by the right bank of the stream and the Castle of Pont-Chartrain.—Order: No. 2 Section, “In advanced guard.”—No. 3 Section, “Rear-guard; keep in touch with the brigade.”—With the remainder I gallop to the Bouviers Battery, and send out the following patrols: (1) Bouviers; (2) Guyancourt;—to rally at Troux.—Halt from 1.5 to 1.10 p.m.

*Second Bound.*—To Troux.—Patrols sent out: (1) towards Guyancourt and return;—(2) Voisins—to rally at Montigny.—Halt from 1.15 to 1.25 p.m.

*Third Bound.*—To Montigny.—Patrols sent out towards Voisins, La Garenne, and Le Manet.—Halt from 1.30 to 1.40 p.m.

*Fourth Bound.*—To the Nantes road.—Halt from 1.45 to 1.55 p.m.

*Fifth Bound.*—To the <sup>crossing of the road from</sup> ~~cross-roads~~ at Maurepas.—Halt from 2 to 2.10 p.m.

*Sixth Bound.*—Elancourt.

*First Incident* (2.5 p.m.).—I am about 550 yards from Elancourt and am followed by a section in rear-guard.—Information sent in by the advanced guard: “A hostile cavalry patrol twelve to fifteen strong has just galloped into Elancourt and halted in the village square.”—Order to No. 1 Troop (First Section): “Join the advanced guard and endeavour



to entice the enemy in your direction, while No. 2 Troop manœuvres round by the south with me.”—I capture the entire patrol.—It is now 2.15 p.m.—I hear the boom of guns towards Trappes.—I gallop back over the ground I have just covered.—A section of the enemy’s machine-guns, from no one knows where—probably from the Maurepas woods—is in position near the Maurepas-Bois d’Arcy cross-roads. It is firing at my brigade at a range of 1,200 yards. I charge in extended order, etc.

2.25 p.m.—I am engaged with the escort to the machine-guns, etc. — A hostile infantry column from the south-west is marching through Elancourt making for Les Gâtines via La Muette.—(End of scheme).—LIEUTENANT C.

*Criticism.*— You kept your men well in hand, and were, therefore, successful.—You took twelve prisoners. You charged the escort and probably gave a useful scare to the men in charge of the machine-guns. But—and it is a very large but—not only had these machine-guns fired upon your force, but a fairly strong infantry column from Elancourt is about to fall on the head and flank of your brigade, which has received no warning.—You were certainly much to blame.—You should have moved on ahead of the infantry advanced guard, and left sections as flank guards at Bouviers, Troux, Montigny, etc.—These stationary flank guards should have watched and patrolled to the south-west and remained in observation until the columns had passed.—Then,

## 120 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

when there was nothing further to fear, they could have rallied to the left of the brigade.—Theoretically your command at the end of the march should find itself in rear of the infantry.—THE DIRECTOR.

When the column has passed, these stationary flank guards may rally to the front <sup>on</sup> of the troop which precedes them.—THE MAJOR.

This is only another proof that cavalry is not accustomed to this particular kind of work—much in the same manner as we find that infantry knows nothing about the employment of divisional cavalry. In garrisons where both cavalry and infantry are stationed together, these co-operative schemes are not infrequently arranged, but you will often find a Company Commander obliged to petition for a squadron to co-operate with.—This is not a sound example to set.—In war, infantry is always accompanied by cavalry. This particular cavalry is responsible for immediate protection, and is really carrying out mounted infantry duty.—We should make ourselves more familiar with such work.—I know of an Infantry Colonel who obtained leave to send out each of his companies once a week with a section of cavalry.—Later on the battalion trained with a troop.—The cavalry sections were very soon immensely improved in this particular duty, while the infantry officers no longer thought of sending out patrols to search villages at the double.—They had been taught the real functions of divisional cavalry.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

The extended range of modern weapons and the increased mobility of cavalry detachments with machine-guns are new and increasing dangers to columns of infantry.—The responsibilities of divisional cavalry thereby are enormously increased, and its numbers will have to be considerably augmented.

It will still be its duty to give warning ; but it will also have to repel hostile cavalry attacks.—In this case the danger was to be found in the direction of the parallel roads.—THE COLONEL.

#### No. 19.

*Troop Scheme.*—Divisional Cavalry.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Officers and N.C.O's, including Corporals.

*Rendezvous* (April 17, 1 p.m.).—Rennemoulins.

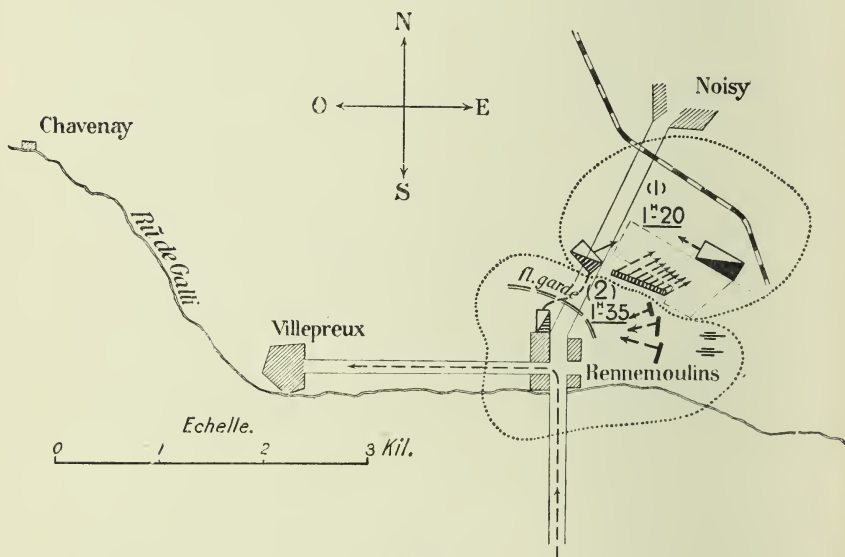
#### PROBLEM S.

*General Idea.*—An infantry division is marching from Saint Cyr to Rennemoulins and thence upon Villepreux and Chavenay, where a battle is in progress.—At Rennemoulins the division changes direction.—A company and a troop of divisional cavalry are detached and ordered to form a stationary flank guard towards Noisy and Bailly.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The troop (Lieut. D) having reconnoitred the Villepreux road and found

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all clear, is north of Rennemoulins.—The company is just outside the village.—Order of the Company Commander to Lieut. D: “The company is about to take up a position as stationary flank guard facing North North-East on the Noisy road, about half a mile north of Rennemoulins.—You will cover it.”—(Distant protection is assured.)  
—THE DIRECTOR.



MAP 22.

### *Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Lieut. D: Troop of divisional cavalry attached to a stationary infantry flank-guard.

*Execution* (1.10 p.m.).—I intend to move rapidly ahead of the infantry, and then, with my map, quietly take my dispositions in accordance with

the ground.—There is a thick fog.—I give the orders : “ The troop will march upon Noisy, Corporal A and four men in advanced guard.”—Then, “ Advance by sections, trot !”—I halt 550 yards from the railway.

Order to Corporal B and three men : “ Patrol along the line to the east.”—To Corporal C and three men : “ Patrol to the north.”

*First Incident* (1.20 p.m.).—My troop is halted on the Noisy road.—The field on my right is bounded by a wire fence.—On the further side I can just discern through the fog, some 650 yards away, a confused mass of troops, apparently hostile cavalry, halted.—I am protected by the wire fence.—I give the order : “ Dismounted action.—At the enemy at 550 yards, six rounds, fire !” \*—I then give the order to mount.

*Second Incident* (1.35 p.m.).—I hear continuous firing from my right rear.—The company is attacked by hostile infantry from Rocquencourt, etc.—(End of scheme.)—LIEUT. D.

*Criticism.*—Your troop was assembled about a mile north of your company. Immediately after

\* “ In order to insure control and to facilitate the passing of orders, the number of rounds to be fired may be named—e.g., ‘ five rounds fire or rapid fire.’ ”—*Musketry Regulations*, part i., para. 273.

“ Economy of ammunition is of importance, and should be effected not by limiting fire when needed, but by judiciously timing its use.—The delivery of sudden bursts of fire will usually be found to be the most effective method of regulating the expenditure of ammunition.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 285.



giving your orders you perceived through the fog a strong force of hostile cavalry.—You were in an excellent position to deal a crushing blow, and you certainly did inflict considerable damage.—This was all very well, but it had one grave drawback—under cover of the fog, your company was attacked, and you had given them no warning.—In this case you ought not to have been seeking a fight.—Concentration was a mistake—Your proper course would have been to have scattered your command.—As soon as you received your orders at Rennemoulins you should have ordered your sections out as follows. “First section, reconnoitre to the east;—second section, to the north;—the third, to the west.”\*—

THE DIRECTOR.

*Initialed*: The Major.

FROM THE LIEUT.-COLONEL TO THE DIRECTOR.—You were quite right to carry out two schemes bearing upon the employment of divisional cavalry.† The incidents which you brought about with so much judgment in both cases condemn concentration with a view to fighting.—You clearly demon-

\* “A large portion of the protective mounted troops should, as a rule, be kept as concentrated as the nature of its duties will admit, and patrols, suitably supported, should be pushed along all the approaches by which hostile bodies might advance.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 236.

† “A commander of divisional cavalry must never forget that it is not his object to fight, but, what is far more important, to warn and protect his infantry. In order to carry this out he must not hesitate, if necessary, to scatter his whole command.”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

strated the necessity for dispersion by sections, but then your scheme became a "section scheme," and ceased to be a "troop scheme."—The measures to be taken by officers can be learned in theory by lectures emphasized by a study of the map.—You have proved yourself right.—In future, therefore, you should reserve such problems for winter lectures in barracks.

In the foregoing schemes you have frequently studied the duties of first-line protective cavalry. You now raise the question of divisional cavalry.—This is a burning question. . . .

Against infantry in column, dismounted action by cavalry is regarded by our Regulations (Article 19, Practical Instruction) as almost tantamount to an insult, and the Regulations are right.—The divisional squadron should be sufficient to protect infantry from any such annoyance.—In Scheme 18 you wisely introduced one of the latest elements in warfare—I refer to the extremely mobile cavalry detachments armed with machine-guns or repeating rifles.—Being detachments capable of inflicting a far more serious damage than a mere insult, they will have to be reckoned with.—It will no longer be sufficient to give the infantry timely warning.—The menace of these detachments must be met.—Neither the divisional squadron scattered—and for that reason far too feeble—nor the cavalry brigade of mounted protective troops, in first-line protection, concentrated and marching in the direction indicated for the main body by the G.O.C.,—(Article 17, Practical

Instruction),—are capable of grappling with these new responsibilities.

The concentration recommended for a cavalry brigade with a view to fighting is in a manner an error, as the withdrawal of troops from other points only increases facilities for the success of hostile cavalry detachments.—What infantry columns really require for their protection is :

1. First - line protective detachments, whose duty it will be to give warning and forward information (distant protection).—You have dealt already with this in Schemes 8 and 10.

2. Covering detachments of cavalry, squadrons, half regiments or mixed detachments sent out in every direction from which an attack is possible. It will be their duty to repel attacks from hostile cavalry.

3. Lastly, a network of divisional cavalry, which must extend the immediate protection of the infantry.

The responsibilities of divisional cavalry may be reserved for winter studies in barracks ; but the duties and work of these protective detachments, when columns are on the march or halted, may be made the subject of varied and instructive exercises in the field.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

As instances refer to Marshal Oyama's commandos in Manchuria.—They were turned by " Officer's patrols."—The Russian cavalry, however, never succeeded in interrupting the forward march of the Japanese columns.—THE COLONEL.

## CAVALRY ACTION.

## No. 20.

*Troop Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Sedan.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (August 8, 4 p.m.).—The Donchery-Bellevue cross-roads.

## PROBLEM T.

*General Idea.*—An infantry brigade from Remilly is pushing forward an offensive reconnaissance on Mézières along the left bank of the Meuse.—It is covered by a cavalry half regiment.—The enemy's force of all arms is reported to be in the neighbourhood of Mézières.

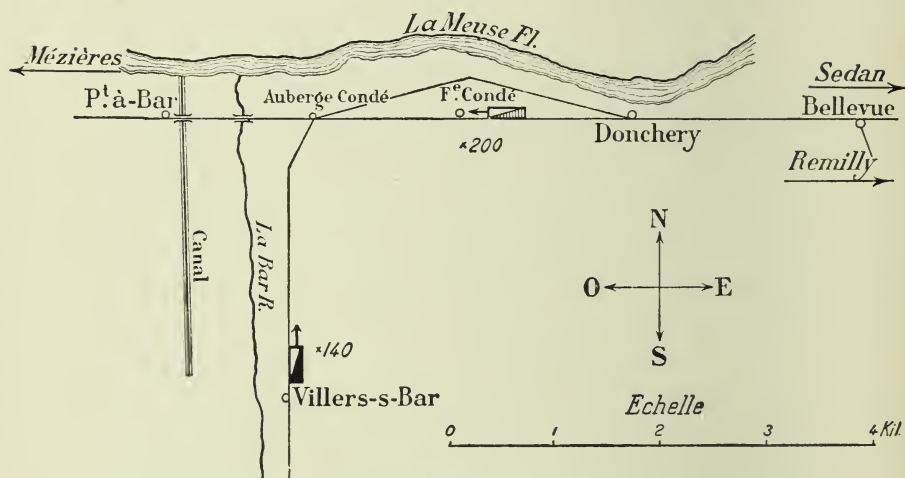
*Special Idea.*—On August 8, 4 p.m., the infantry brigade has left Remilly.—The half regiment having passed Sedan, has made a bound to the Bellevue cross-road, and halted.—The Major commanding the half regiment gives the following order to Lieutenant A :—" I intend to leave Bellevue at 4.30 p.m., and am going to Pont-à-Bar.—Hold the bridges over the Bar and the Canal with your troop till I arrive."—THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Holding a bridge.

*Execution* (4 p.m.).—I am at Bellevue with my troop, dismounted.—There is but one way to hold

the bridges at Pont-à-Bar—*i.e.*, by reaching them before the enemy. I must therefore act at once.—I shall move as swiftly as possible by the shortest road.—I give the order therefore: “Route—Donchery, Condé Farm.—Pont-à-Bar.—Sergeant X and two men in advanced guard.”—I then give the further order: “Mount! Advance by sections!—Gallop!”



MAP 23.

*First Incident* (4.15 p.m.).—I gallop up to the Condé Farm.—I see a hostile troop emerging from Villers-sur-Bar on the right bank of the Bar, and moving towards the Meuse.—It is in column of sections and at the walk.—I halt my troop, and remain concealed behind the Condé Farm.—I send word back to the half regiment, and order a patrol forward to find out what is going on towards Villers-sur-Bar.



*Second Incident* (4.30 p.m.).—The enemy's troop has reached the Donchery road—I notice a few horsemen approaching the bridges.—I give the order to gallop and make for them.—As I come out by the inn on to the Mézières road, I am fired at from the Canal bridge.—I gallop on, but have to pull up at the bridge, as there is a wire entanglement across the road, etc.—(End of scheme.)

*Criticism.*—Your orders were to occupy Pont-à-Bar, and you didn't do so. — You gave the hostile troop every opportunity of opposing you. You may consider yourself lucky it did not charge you in rear while you were held up in front by the wire entanglements.—You should have detached one section to gallop to the bridges, while you went on to the Condé Tavern with the remainder of your Troop.—Once on the Mézières road, you should have harassed the enemy's troop and held him in check.—THE DIRECTOR.

It was certainly your duty to hold the bridges over the Bar.—I should have made straight for them, and endeavoured to avoid the enemy.—THE MAJOR.

Your orders were to occupy the Bar bridges.—A hostile troop, already there, prevented you.—You should have charged the enemy.—Once overcome, you could have easily held the bridges.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

TO THE MAJOR.—You were making for the bridges over the Bar. — When you reached the nearest, you

ordered your men to dismount.—The enemy's troop, which has spotted you, and cannot be expected to remain inactive, of course gallops after you and charges you in rear.—THE COLONEL.

TO THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.—You charged the enemy with the whole of your troop.—This was a preferable solution.—Assuming that the hostile troop after a short encounter were to retire on Villers-sur-Bar, you would have sent some men after them, and then, no doubt, begun to think of your bridges ; but it would be too late.—You might be wounded.—In any case you would have lost sight of your objective.—When you reached the river you found the bridges held by hostile cavalry—possibly the patrol which discovered you.—The Director's solution is correct : a few men to the bridges as quickly as possible.—This was the order.—Then, with the remainder of the troop, go for the enemy.—The Director says : “ Harass ” his troop.—Here I disagree with him, and think the Lieut.-Colonel's suggestion better.—You are on high ground ; the enemy is at a lower level at the walk in column of sections.—He has not yet seen you.—What more do you wish for ?—Send a few men to the bridges.—This was your mission ; then make for the enemy and charge.—THE COLONEL.

TO LIEUT. A.—(1) While galloping forward you catch sight of a hostile troop and pull up.—(2) You take cover.—(3) You send back a message, and order out a patrol to Villers-sur-Bar,

etc.; and yet you talk of speed—speed which is the main characteristic of cavalry action!—It is superfluous to criticize.—Officers must be placed in clearly defined situations of this nature; they must become accustomed to think, decide, and give orders at the gallop.—Power to do this is an essential quality in a Cavalry Leader—unfortunately it is too rarely met with.—THE COLONEL.

## No. 21.

*Troop Scheme.*—The neighbourhood of Sedan.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Officers and N.C.O s.

*Rendezvous* (August 13, 8 a.m.).—Daigny (after squadron training).

## PROBLEM U.

*General Idea.*—A cavalry division, reconnoitring to the south of Mézières, <sup>along the right</sup> ~~on the left~~ bank of the Meuse, has just become engaged with a hostile cavalry division in the neighbourhood of Saint Menges.—Owing to this encounter, the reconnoitring bodies, which till then had been interrupted in their advance, are enabled to cross the Givonne.—The enemy, which these bodies have been endeavouring to locate, is reported to be advancing from Mouzon and Carignan on Sedan.

*Special Idea.*—Lieut. B's troop, one of the

reconnoitring detachments, has been given Ily, the Chevalier woods, Pouru, etc., as a line of general advance.—At 8 a.m. he crosses the Givonne between Daigny and Givonne, assembles at Haybes, and continues to move forward.—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

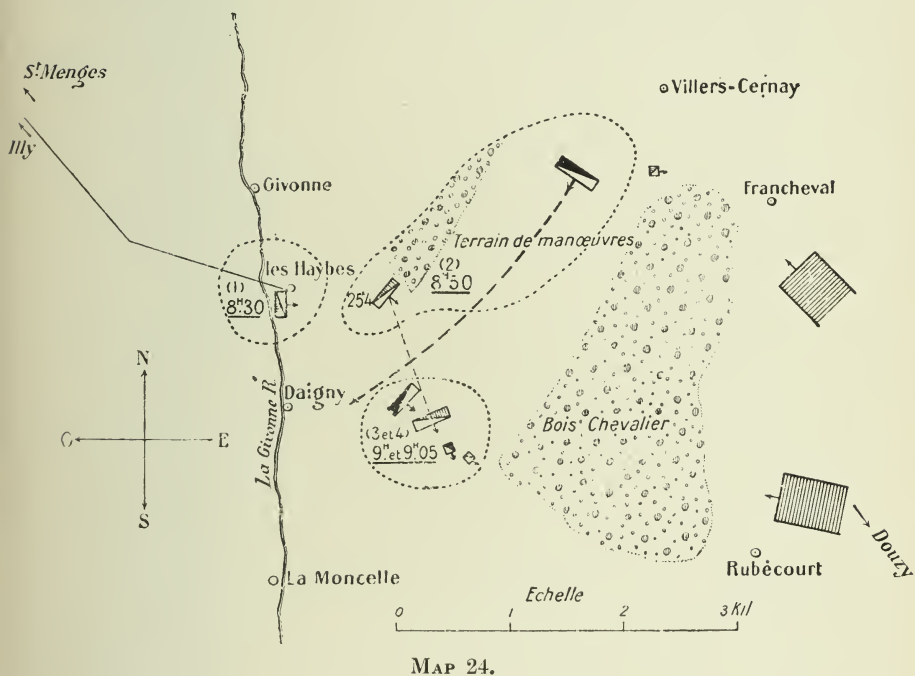
*Troop Scheme.*—A reconnoitring detachment nearing its objective.

*Execution* (8.30 a.m.).—A cyclist from La Nouvelle brings me the following information: “Strong columns of hostile infantry from Carignan are already clear of Douzy, and are apparently about to concentrate in rear of the Chevalier woods towards Rubécourt and Francheval.”—I send a despatch back to the G.O.C. cavalry, but intend to verify the report I have received.—With this object, I make for the Chevalier woods to the north of Daigny, and send out reconnaissances thence to the east of the wood by the north and south.—I give the order to trot, and make for point 254 via the Haybes ravine.

*Second Incident* (8.50 a.m.).—I am at the southwest extremity of the training ground at the southern edge of the wood.—My troop has halted and is well concealed.—I am giving instructions, when I catch sight of a hostile troop in line trotting along the northern boundary of the ground, and moving on Daigny from the direction of Villers-

Cernay.—I allow it to pass, and directly it is out of sight, send out two reconnaissances, and a patrol, to watch the direction it takes.

*Third Incident* (9 a.m.)—My southern reconnaissance, moving south of the Chevalier woods, has reached the brow of the hill, north-east of



Daigny, when it is charged by a hostile patrol. I intend to extricate my men, and gallop towards it.

*Fourth Incident* (9.5 a.m.)—The enemy's patrol has fallen back;—I am charged by the hostile troop which, coming up from Daigny, takes me in flank.—My troop is dispersed, but the reconnais-



sance has been rescued, and is able to continue its advance towards Rubécourt.

*Fifth Incident* (9.45 a.m.).—Patrol No. 1 has ascertained what is going on in rear of the Chevalier woods.—Two despatch riders with the information, returning by the same way they went, attempt to cross the Givonne towards les Haybes.—They are intercepted by a hostile patrol watching the river. (End of scheme.)

*Criticism.*—Having avoided the enemy's troop, you were eventually attacked by it.—You therefore voluntarily placed yourself at a disadvantage. Again, the information forwarded by your patrol never reached you because the hostile troop, unhampered and master of the situation, was free to watch the river, fords, and bridges.—You should have launched your troop against the enemy under the command of an N.C.O., and then, after sending out a patrol to the north, gone yourself with two or three men along the southern fringe of the wood to verify the truth of the important information which had been brought in by the cyclist.—That was your mission.—In the first place your troop should have so manœuvred as to enable you to reach your objective; and, in the second, to allow freedom for your information to return.—  
THE DIRECTOR.

As soon as you had caught sight of the enemy, you could have slipped along the edge of the wood and charged it in flank.—Had you defeated the

hostile troop, you would have been free to act as you pleased.

TO THE DIRECTOR.—You advise the officer to hand over the command of his troop to an N.C.O. to carry out the attack.—In suggesting this, does it not occur to you that an officer would thus abandon his own post of honour, which, in a fight, is at the head of his troop?—THE MAJOR.

I wish to emphasize one point: your attack upon the enemy will succeed—that is certain—but you may be wounded or drawn into a pursuit, which may end in a trap, etc.—Your mission is, for the moment, lost sight of.—I think we must accept the Director's solution as correct.—In every mission—according to Regulations—there must be an executive group and a group of protection.—Detach the executive group, then launch the main body at the enemy's troop, which is the obstacle.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

While agreeing with the Director, the fight should be carried out as indicated by the Major.—When two bodies of cavalry are in close proximity to one another, a collision is inevitable, and you are bound to fight or you will be forced to do so.—Further, the Director has demonstrated that it is the best means of carrying out your mission. While the troop is fighting, and, if I may say so, giving a good hiding to the hostile troop, who is it who should reconnoitre?—Which is it to be,—the

officer in command or the N.C.O.?—I think it should be the former.—The importance of the information required demands it. — Everyone should know where to rally.—Information would be sent back to Haybes, and the troop would manœuvre accordingly.

What applies to a troop applies equally to a cavalry division when reconnoitring.—The initial orders make this quite clear.—While the cavalry masses are concentrating with a view to fighting, the reconnoitring groups, which till then have been unable to advance, will now, and only now, be able to push forward and return.—(Engagement of August 15, 1870, already quoted in Troop Scheme No. 4, Pursuit.)

To avoid fighting and argue whether it is advisable, not only produces general depression, but is to surrender and place yourself at the mercy of a rival cavalry trained in a more aggressive school.\*—  
THE COLONEL.

\* “Make use of your strategy to obtain information, draw swords and go for the enemy regardless of his numbers, without giving him time to realize your weakness.

“This is one of the duties of a reconnoitring detachment. When its patrols are powerless, or when they are pursued by hostile protective troops, the detachment, as the stronger element, will intervene itself and endeavour to pierce the screen so as to provide a wider scope for its patrols.”—CAPITAINE LOIR : *Cavalerie*.

## No. 22.

*Troop Scheme.*—The neighbourhood of Sedan.

*Director.*—The Squadron Leader.

*Taking Part.*—The Officers and N.C.O's.

*Rendezvous* (August 21, 6 a.m.). — Bazielles Station.

## PROBLEM V.

*General Idea.*—A cavalry division from the north reconnoitring southwards along the right bank of the Meuse, has reached the outskirts of Mézières. Reconnaissances have been sent out in the direction of Carignan and Mouzon, where a cavalry division has been reported.

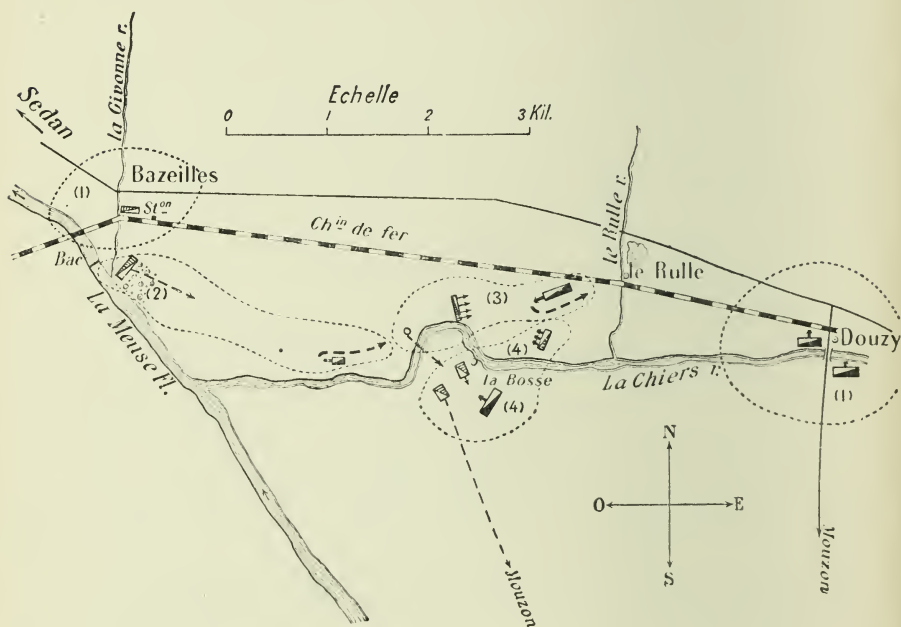
*Special Idea.*—One of the reconnoitring groups consists of Lieut. D, with his scouts.—His objective is the neighbourhood of Mouzon, the right bank of the Meuse.—On August 21 at 6 a.m. Lieut. D's detachment, coming from the heights north of Sedan, where it spent the night, is at Bazeilles station.—He has seized telegrams giving information that a hostile cavalry division is in the neighbourhood of Inor marching towards Mouzon. He sends back word and continues his mission.—  
THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Report.*

*Troop Scheme.*—Crossing a river.

*Execution* (6 a.m.).—I make my dispositions to reach Mouzon.

*First Incident* (6.5 a.m.).—I hear that the bridge over the Chiers at Douzy is held by two hostile troops. I decide to avoid the bridge at Douzy, and to cross the Chiers as quietly as I can between Douzy and Remilly.—I make, therefore, under cover for the ford across the Givonne near the



MAP 25.

Bazeilles ferry and seize the ferryman.—I am well concealed.—Order to the troop: “First bound—To the Chiers, by La Bosse Farm. Gallop!”—

*Second Incident* (6.20 a.m.).—As I come out into the open I catch sight of a hostile patrol on the banks of the Chiers, a little to the west of Rulle,



I return to my starting-point, the hostile patrol disappears. I again move forward at the gallop and reach the Chiers in a single bound.—I am well sheltered by a bend in the river.—All appears to be quiet.—Fringed with trees and in parts by underwood, the banks and their approaches at this point are favourable to a crossing.—I intend to cross by sections.—That portion of the troop which is disengaged will protect the other, first on the right side and afterwards on the left bank.—I give the order therefore:—"Point to make for, the district north of Mouzon via the Meuse; messages to be sent back to La Bosse Farm, where we now are."—To Corporal A's section: "Swim the river, and take up a defensive position on the left bank. Direction of danger, Douzy."—To Sergeant Y: "With the remainder of the troop, take up a line facing Bazeilles and Douzy; prepare for dismounted action.'—I remain on the left bank and personally superintend the crossing.

Corporal A's section swim the river, the men clinging to their horse's manes.\*

*Third Incident* (6.35 a.m.).—A troop of the

\* "Every man in the ranks should be taught to swim."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 212.

"All saddlery, except the head collar and bridoon reins, is removed and secured in the saddle blanket with the head rope. . . . Prior to entering the water the reins should be knotted, and a lock of the mane pulled through the knot to prevent the reins slipping over the head and becoming entangled with the fore legs."—*Ibid.*, p. 213.

enemy from Rulle appears coming towards us at the trot ; it is south of the railway ;—we fire and it disappears.

Two of Corporal B's men are unable to swim. His section off-saddle, undress, and put the clothing, arms, and saddlery in the bags, which are tied together so as to form a raft.—A strong swimmer crosses the stream and, with the head ropes, forms an endless cable.—Another good swimmer takes his horse over, the remaining horses are then driven in after him and follow.—The non-swimmers hang on to the raft and are towed across.

*Fourth Incident* (7 a.m.).—Some fifteen of the enemy's mounted men again appear from the direction of Rulle and open fire.—It is returned by Sergeant Y.—Simultaneously a hostile troop from Douzy appears at full gallop by the left bank of the river and disperses my two first sections.—Those of my scouts, who have crossed the river, are able to go on to Mouzon ;—I manage to escape with Sergeant Y's section towards the ferry at Bazeilles, where I cross the Meuse and remain in observation.

*Fifth Incident* (10 a.m.).—Some of my scouts having crossed the Chiers have been able to approach Mouzon, and locate the main body of the hostile cavalry assembled on the heights north of that place.—They remained in contact.—Two despatch riders with the information hasten towards the Chiers. Corporal C and four men have advanced to meet them, to receive the despatch which will be thrown

across from one bank to the other.—This is prevented by the appearance of a hostile troop from La Bosse on the right bank of the river. (End of scheme.)

*Criticism.*—I think you were well advised to avoid the Douzy bridge when you found it to be strongly held.—You were right also in trying to cross the Chiers by a surprise.—I am not going to say it was impossible for you to have succeeded, but with two hostile troops reported at Douzy it was certainly risky ; in any case, as soon as a hostile patrol had appeared in such close proximity, you were compromised.—I ask again, what right had you to conclude that the enemy would remain inactive?—A few of your scouts escaped and obtained information, but their reports could not be sent back.—What should you have done?—Obviously always the same thing! Send your best scouts forward towards Mouzon, and with the main body of your detachment, give battle yourself to the enemy's troop in the direction of Rulle.—You show yourself, fix the enemy's attention, attack and out-manceuvre him.—Meanwhile, your scouts will have hastened to Mouzon, inspected and reported.—The information will get through.—THE DIRECTOR.

As a means of swimming across a river, I have seen cuirassiers (heavy cavalry), instead of holding on to their horses' manes, slip off along the back and hang on by the tails.—The horses towed them easily

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across.—The method adopted by No. 2 Section was the simplest and the best; it not only had the advantage of keeping the accoutrements and clothing dry, but also made it possible for the non-swimmers to cross.—THE MAJOR.

Here, again, fighting was the best means of carrying out your mission.—Against a superior enemy strongly established at the bridge at Douzy, there could be no question of your acting as if you were in open country.—In spite of this, the two troops at the Chiers bridge might have been contained by the fire of a few dismounted men in the neighbourhood of Rulle.\*—The remainder of the troop, meanwhile, might have crossed the river toward La Bosse and sent out scouts to carry out the original mission.†—They might also have been able, by charging the enemy in rear, to take him at a disadvantage.—Such methods would soon tend to dispel any illusions—survivals of 1870—and make a rival cavalry more careful.—The principles are

\* “Sudden bursts (of fire) followed by pauses will, if skilfully timed, have great moral effect, and have the advantage of deceiving and confusing the enemy.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 285.

† At this time there were no hostile German infantry west of the Meuse nearer than Banthéville. The troops on the flank of the French, from Vouziers to the Dun, were entirely horsemen. No more valuable demonstration of the priceless value of cavalry was ever made, than that afforded by the Germans during this campaign. They were more than the “eyes and ears of the army”; they were an impenetrable screen concealing from view the actual force and the movements of their army.—HOOPER: *Sedan*.

the same as those in vogue at the time of the First Empire.\*—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

This is certainly right.—The executive group sent to Mouzon would have been thus given far more freedom of action than that permitted by Lieut. D's classic but more timorous plan.

The advisability of fighting to guarantee the successful issue of an enterprise is clearly demonstrated by exercises of this nature.—Once thoroughly steeped with the offensive spirit we shall not only desire and look for a fight, but we shall engage in it without argument.—This once understood, our cavalry will again resume its rightful precedence amongst the three arms.—THE COLONEL.

\* NOTE.—The provisional regulations of May 14, 1912, which appeared after the publication of the first edition of this work, adopt the principle for fighting that the troop should avoid scattering its forces (Clause 466).

On level ground the squadron will charge.

In broken ground it should manœuvre. It does not appear that any departure from the spirit of the recent regulations is made by the disposition of a few rifles against the enemy, intended as it is to favour the offensive action of the squadron, which, in fact, will always be united in one body at the moment of conflict.—COLONEL MONSENERGUE.



## CHAPTER II

### SQUADRON SCHEMES

#### OFFENSIVE MANŒUVRE.

THE strength and composition of a squadron renders it a tactical unit.—A squadron should manœuvre.

It is all very well to accept as a principle the necessity for “manœuvre”; it is something altogether different to put this principle into practice. To manœuvre is a large order.—The word itself requires definition.—So far as manœuvring is concerned, there are two conflicting schools.—One, the more modern, which advocates going for the enemy as the objective, advancing to meet him, and fighting him with the main body while a detachment manœuvres against him.—This principle so dear to the Germans and their pupils the Japanese, is, of course, the principle of Saint Privat so faithfully imitated on the Yalu at Yang-tse-ling, Oua-lang-keon, Liao-yang, and Mukden.—For its success, however, it requires numerical superiority, and it means the sacrifice of thousands of lives for no definite purpose.—Finally, after a battle of this nature, it is only too often found that the whole business has to be begun all over again.

The method of the second school, which has only now, it seems, begun to dawn upon the minds and temperaments of many of our soldiers, is that of Bonaparte,—and afterwards of the Emperor, till 1813.—It takes as its objective a geographical area, the possession of which, from the configuration of the ground chosen, places the enemy at a disadvantage in the initial phases of the attack.—The advocates of this method throw out a detachment on the enemy's front so as to retain him in his position and, if possible, deceive him, while they manœuvre with their main body.—This was the plan adopted by Napoleon on the historic days of Carcare, Lodi, Bassano, Arcole, and Marengo. — It was the manœuvre of Augsburg in 1805 and of Landshut in 1806. Again it was the manœuvre of Dresden in 1813.

Napoleon is at Dresden.—The allies are moving down from Bohemia.—The Emperor's plan is to engage them on their front opposite the city of Dresden, which is held by a detachment under Saint Cyr, while, with the main army, he himself moves on Pirna so as to attack them in rear. Saint Cyr had begun to be doubtful of his own strength.—Both confidence and luck were on the wane.—The plan was changed, and, as at Saint Privat, the main army was engaged upon the enemy's front, while the detachment manœuvred to the rear.—True the Battle of Dresden was a brilliant victory.—But what followed?—The allies

were allowed to retreat without being pursued, or, perhaps it would be more correct to say, Saint Cyr's pursuit miscarried.—The result was the terrible blunder at Kulm, which compromised the whole campaign.

Thus it was to the end.—At Bautzen the army attacked.—Ney manœuvred at the critical moment, but failed to arrive.—Again, at Ligny, Napoleon attacked and sent word to D'Erlon to manœuvre.—D'Erlon never appeared upon the scene.—At Waterloo the army attacked, relying upon Grouchy to manœuvre.—Grouchy never arrived.—At Dresden the Grand Army should not have attacked, nor should Saint Cyr have manœuvred.—He should have contained the enemy in front while the Grand Army manœuvred to execute a turning movement.—At Liao-yang, against more than sixty miles of Russian entrenchments, Oyama with his three armies ought never to have attacked along the entire front; while Kuroki was manœuvring towards Mukden on the evening of the second day with only a single division.—It is easy to be wise after the event; but it would have been far better if one of the armies had delivered a frontal attack, while Oyama, with the two others, manœuvred so as to throw themselves across the Russian line of retreat.

The manœuvre of Lodi and the manœuvre of Arcole must remain our models.—In the following schemes officers will be encouraged to develop

the habit of manœuvring.—Let there be no frontal attacks, which are never decisive, and only end in useless slaughter. (Example—Malegnano, 1859.) The enemy's force should be held to its ground by a detachment while it is manœuvred by the main body.—As far as possible, the manœuvre will be directed upon the enemy's rear.

Our officers must learn to grapple with unexpected incidents, to come to rapid decisions, and in open country to charge.—This is the natural function of the mounted arm.—But they must also be taught to think for themselves, and develop their own initiative and will.—For a commander in the field these qualities are essential :—if we can add the special attributes of a Cavalry Leader we shall obtain the most perfect combination attainable.

Officers in command, therefore, will decide upon their plans, formulate their intentions, and give out their orders in accordance with the above principles.

A plan once decided upon, reconnaissances will be carried out in accordance with the nature of the intelligence required by the leader for the free development of his manœuvre.—Information as to position of the enemy is, of course, important.\*—It

<sup>1800</sup>  
\* In ~~1790~~ Bonaparte, by his marvellous foresight and audacity, was enabled to cross the Alps, pass the Po, and seize Stradella, the starting-point for his attack upon Melas, who was engaged in the Siege of Genoa. Bonaparte meanwhile had just learned that Genoa had capitulated. At the time, although master of the defiles after Montebello, and just about to debauch, he was ignorant of the whereabouts of the Austrian Army.

is given in the problem; but the manœuvre once outlined, information as to the nature and accessibility of the roads and ground to be covered is, of course, required.—More than this, before encountering the enemy when a conflict is inevitable, it becomes a vital necessity.\*

I have rarely known orders beginning in any other way than the stereotyped —“Send out three reconnaissances.”—How? When? Where?† —The order seldom gives the slightest indication The general conception comes as best it may.

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Hence an anxiety, quite easy to understand, in the mind of the Commander-in-Chief. Hence, also, dispositions based upon circumstances, the nature of which certainly explains some of the characteristic features of the Battle of Marengo.—*Col. Monsenerque.*

\* “The Regulations state that the protective cavalry is to report on the topography of the country traversed as well as upon other matters.—But this order does not apply to protective cavalry alone. Every reconnaissance, patrol, detachment, or advanced guard must invariably furnish information concerning the ground over which they have moved.—The maps don’t indicate whether those poplars and walnut-trees render an otherwise open country as difficult to cross as a thick forest. And yet what is it the map does not tell to those who can and will read? —But a map may not be up to date.—The tactical sense of an officer must be sufficiently developed to enable him to realize the full importance of those vines and wire fences,—that marshy field, that high and bushy hedge stretching across the plain and hiding the horizon,—that recently built hamlet not shown upon the map.—He should forward a report concerning them without delay.”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

† “The instructions of the Commander of a force to his Cavalry Leaders should be definite and precise as to the information that is required and the localities to be reconnoitred.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 259.



The main body starts off and comes upon its information as it advances.—Numerous conflicting and confusing reports are brought in.—They merely worry the leader without providing anything to work upon.—He forges on straight ahead, and finally, of course, comes upon the enemy ;—he then deploys.—If he happens to be beaten the leader declares that his cavalry sent in no information.—This explains why cavalry is so frequently disparaged. — We may, however, still console ourselves with the fact that it has always been the most favoured arm of our greatest Generals.

### No. 1.

*Squadron Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Sedan.

*Director.*—Major D.

*Taking Part.*—The Captains of the first half regiment.

*Rendezvous* (January 8, 1 p.m.).—La Chapelle.

### PROBLEM A.

*General Idea.*—A detachment which has started from Bouillon is moving in the direction of Carignan via La Chapelle and Francheval.—It is covered in front by cavalry.

The enemy (all arms) is reported towards Carignan.—Reconnaissances have been sent out, and there are first-line protective mounted troops ahead.

*Special Idea* (January 8, 1 p.m.).—The brigade is assembled at La Chapelle.—Order of the G.O.C.: “The brigade will march to Carignan.”—Route: Villers-Cernay — Francheval — Pouru-aux-Bois — Escombres — Messincourt — Carignan. — Average pace: four and a half miles an hour.

*Immediate Protection*.—First regiment in front, to the right and left;—second regiment in rear, to the right and left.—One squadron in advanced guard.

Bodies of hostile cavalry are reported on the right bank of the Meuse towards Pouru and Francheval.—Order of the Colonel commanding the first regiment: “Captain R’s squadron in advanced guard.”—THE DIRECTOR.

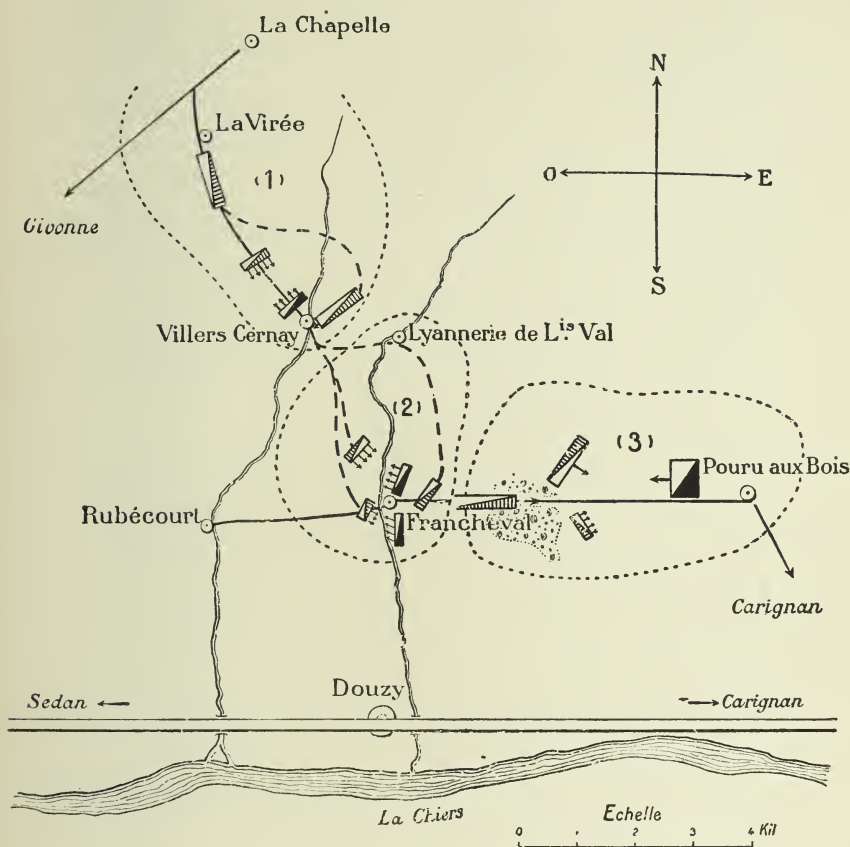
### *Summary of Report.*

*Squadron Scheme*.—Captain R: Offensive manoeuvre.

*Execution* (1.10 p.m.).—I am at the southern exit from La Chapelle.—The squadron trots as far as La Virée Farm.—I then order the walk.—Lieut. A’s troop in point continues to advance.

*First Bound*.—The cross-roads at Givonne.—Halt, patrols, etc.

*First Incident* (1.20 p.m.).—Information from leading patrol: “There is nothing to be seen in Villers-Cernay; but I am suspicious of the



MAP 26.

village.”\*—I intend to manœuvre as if it were occupied.—Order to Lieut. A: “March upon

\* “If the enemy is not found where he was expected, the reconnoitrer should think for himself as to what his commander would require him to do; as a rule, negative information should be sent back.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 262.

“Although apparently paradoxical, it may be affirmed in war that ‘negative’ information is the only ‘positive’ information obtainable. . . .”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

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Villers-Cernay; halt about 700 yards from the village, and fire down the main street."

I lead the squadron round by a path through the woods to the left, and cross the brook at Rubécourt rather less than a mile north of the village through which I gallop—one troop from the north and two from the east.—The march resumed.

*Second Bound.*—Francheval.

*Second Incident* (1.45 p.m.).—The squadron closes in on the leading troop near the crest of the hill east of Villers-Cernay.

The leading patrol sends back word that the two bridges over the River Magne are barricaded to the west of Francheval.—I intend to make a frontal attack with one troop upon both bridges, while I turn the enemy with the two remaining troops, mounted.—I therefore order: "Lieut. A, dismounted action—objective, the bridge on the Francheval—Villers-Cernay road. Lieut. B,—objective, the bridge on the Francheval-Rubécourt road.—As soon as you are ready open fire."

I gallop off by the Lyanerie de Louis-Val, and turn back along the left bank of the stream towards Francheval.—The forward march resumed.

*Third Incident* (2.30 p.m.).—Third bound, and halt on the Poru Valley road some 450 yards east of Francheval.—Information sent in by leading patrol: "There are five or six hostile squadrons together, dismounted, at the western exit from Pouru-aux-Bois."—Order of the Brigadier: "I shall move

as quickly as possible down the road, and make straight for the enemy.—Hold the head of the defile.”

Order to Lieut. A (leading troop): “Gallop to the eastern exit from the defile, and dismounted action.”—I remain with the squadron.

*Fourth Incident* (2.35 p.m.).—I am <sup>330</sup>~~270~~ yards from the exit from the defile.—I hear somewhat heavy firing.—Lieut. A’s troop is unable to come out.—I give the orders therefore: “Lieut. A, dismounted action.—Lieut. B, clear the defile, and charge in extended order,” etc.

I am at last able to clear the defile—and take the following dispositions to ensure the safe passage of the brigade:—Lieut. A’s troop in position, south of the road, dismounted; the remainder of the squadron mounted, in line, facing Poru.—The hostile cavalry, which has mounted, advances towards us at the trot; at this moment the brigade emerges at the gallop, and is attacked before having had time to deploy fully. (End of scheme.)—CAPTAIN R.

*Criticism.*—The advanced guard is the real school for both action and manœuvre.—The highest honour to be won by a cavalry officer is to have it said of him that he is a reliable advanced guard commander.—You manœuvred against Villers-Cernay as if you knew it to be occupied, and you proved to be right.

As for your method, which was that always recognized, you put it into practice with con-



fidence and dash.—You entered the defile rather as if it were already conquered territory.—You found the exit blocked.—You had to reveal your strength, and meanwhile the hostile cavalry took the alarm.—The safety of your brigade thus became compromised.—You should have acted as you did at Villers-Cernay and at Francheval,—manœuvred to gain possession of the exit from the defile,—that is, you should have sent Lieut. A's troop down the road, moved with the squadron south of the woods, and then turned down towards the exit from the defile.—THE DIRECTOR.

These advanced guard schemes require working up.—The precautions you took were sound and clearly thought out; you came quickly to a decision, and the execution was prompt.—You did not wait to find things out.—You will possibly be told you had preconceived ideas.\*—This was not really the case. What would have been preconceived and very disastrous would have been to imagine that a defile you were about to enter was not held—even if you had received intelligence to that effect.—In war information is always subject to suspicion.—Examples:

\* “General Kuropatkin accordingly was led to believe that the main attack would be delivered in the hilly country to the east and south-east of Mukden, and not on the plains of the Liaho and Hunho.—Another series of incidents then intervened which only confirmed him in his mistake, a further proof that in war nothing is more perilous than to entertain a preconceived idea of the movements of the enemy.”—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.

Incidents three and four and that of the bridge of Arcole!

Regarding your dispositions at the exit from the defile (*d*) in Incident No. 4, you kept your squadron mounted near the exit.—This was a mistake—to a certain extent minimized, I admit—by your having dismounted one of your troops.—What was your objective?—To keep the enemy away from the defile as long as possible.—Very well, then, manœuvre accordingly.—By remaining mounted at this point you drew the enemy on.—You should either have dismounted your whole squadron south of the road, or else dismounted a troop (as you did), and, with the remainder of your squadron, made a resolute dash for the enemy.—As soon as you saw him mount you could have advanced upon him in extended order down the centre of the defile, thus masking its exit. Never, in short, allow the enemy to initiate a movement calculated to hamper your brigade.—LIEUT.-COLONEL M.

You ordered the brigade to march at an average speed of four and a half miles an hour—a cavalry brigade covering an army corps, if its speed is reckoned in averages, can only march at the same rate as infantry—that is, three miles an hour. Do you realize what this would mean?—In cases such as this cavalry must march in successive bounds from line to line, remaining in observation at each.—To cover the twenty miles it thus requires as much time as its infantry.—COLONEL X.

## No. 2.

*Squadron Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Angers.

*Director.*—The Major.

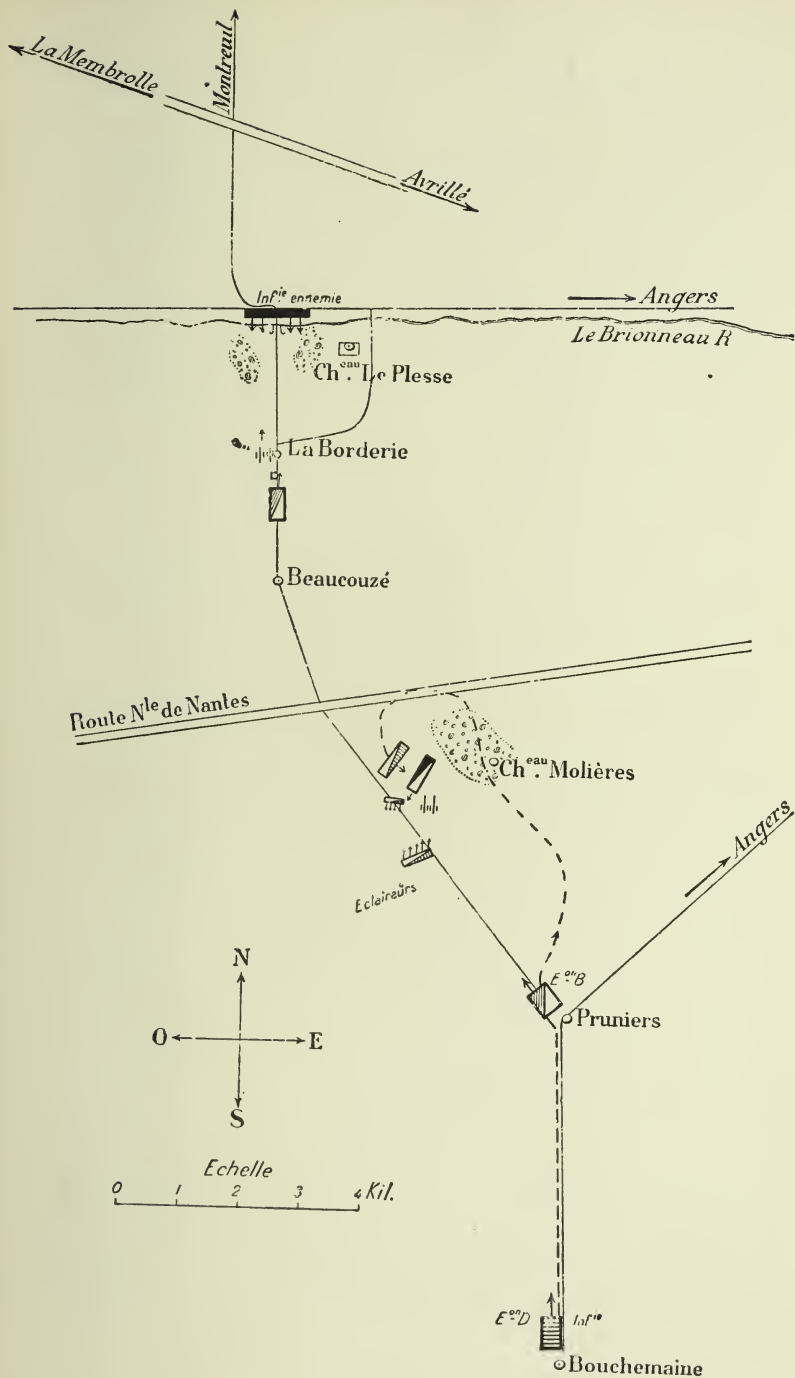
*Taking Part.*—The Officers of the second half regiment.

*Rendezvous* (February 6, 1 p.m.).—Bouchemaine.

## PROBLEM B.

*General Idea.*—An infantry regiment (A) has been defeated in the neighbourhood of Bouchemaine, and is retreating to the north.—An attempt is being made to rally its main body on the left bank of the Mayenne at Feneu. —It has a machine-gun section and a squadron of cavalry at its disposition.—The bridge at Cantenay is supposed to have been destroyed.—The enemy will be marked by flags—artillery, red; cavalry, blue; infantry, yellow.—The retreating force is being pursued by an infantry regiment (B) and three squadrons of cavalry.—Two of these have gone on through Montreuil to Angers, so as to reach the Yuigné bridge before their opponents.

*Special Idea.*—Regiment B is at Bouchemaine; Captain D's squadron is at the northern exit from the village.—Order to Captain D: "The enemy has been beaten, and is retiring upon Montreuil.—Gain contact, and pursue at once.—The infantry will follow you up."—THE DIRECTOR.



MAP 27.

*Summary of Report.*

*Squadron Scheme.*—Captain D : Cavalry in pursuit with machine-guns.

*Execution.*—I am at the northern exit from Bouchemaine.—I intend to gain contact as quickly as possible, and shall manœuvre according to circumstances.

Order to the scouts : “ Gain contact.”\*—I move off with the squadron.

*First Bound.*—Pruniers.

*First Incident* (1.30 p.m.).—I am at the western exit from Pruniers, when I receive the following information : “ A section of machine-guns is in a position of readiness on the Beaucouzé-Pruniers road, in line with the boundary of the park of Castle Molières.—Half a squadron in column of troops, mounted, is at the side, and in rear, of the park.—Our scouts have sent out patrols ahead towards Beaucouzé ; the remainder of the scout troop, dismounted, is under good cover.”—I intend to take advantage of a demonstration made by the scouts upon the enemy’s front to turn him on the right and attack him in rear.—Having ordered the scouts to continue their dismounted action, I there-

\* “ At one moment the Prussian staff lost our trail in the Plains of Champagne owing to our sudden change of plans. But they quickly found us again by means of their cavalry, which never lost touch, and marching on our flank, spread out a curtain behind which their army worked.”—BONIE : *La Cavalerie Française*, 1871.



fore gallop round to the north of Castle Molière.—I then turn into the main road to Nantes, and follow the pathway to Pruniers.—Order to No. 1 Section: “Take possession of the machine-guns.”—I come out with the remainder of the squadron and charge the hostile cavalry.—I capture the guns, harness them up, and drive off with them, and, as I have a sufficient number of men in the squadron specially trained to handle them, I intend to use them.—I continue the pursuit in the direction of Beaucouzé—Castle le Plesse.

*Second Incident* (2.15 p.m.).—I am near Beaucouzé at the Borderie Farm.—Message received: “The scout troop is close to the bridge <sup>over the</sup> of Brionneau, near Castle le Plesse; a section of the enemy’s infantry bars the way.”—The ground is much enclosed, and cavalry cannot leave the roads. I intend to force the passage with the aid of the machine-guns.—I give the order therefore: “First half section, Action. Objective, the road and bridge.”—Ten minutes later I order the first troop to charge. The bridge has been obstructed by wire entanglements, and the troop is fired upon from right and left.—It retires, and I am unable to advance.

*Third Incident* (2.45 p.m.).—The infantry, B, arrives.—End of the exercise.—CAPTAIN D.

*Criticism.*—You are ordered to pursue, and should be in your element.—At Pruniers your advance is checked by a machine-gun section with a weak escort.—You act as cavalry should, and capture

it—merely the logical sequel.—You now have two machine-guns.—At <sup>the</sup> Brionneau the passage over the bridge is barred ; you are unable to cross. You therefore assume the character of a gunner. You should have ordered the men in charge of the machine-guns to fire at the bridge.—You should have given them a troop as escort, and then with the rest of the squadron galloped round by Castle le Plesse and taken the enemy in flank.\*—The odds are that you would have captured or driven him off ; in any case, you would have opened the road across.—Let us remain cavalry soldiers and not take over the gunners' duties unless it is absolutely necessary.—THE DIRECTOR.

In pursuit remember you are cavalry, and do not allow yourself to become a slave to the guns. Make use of them boldly when you have the opportunity, as a pivot on which to manœuvre.

A machine-gun fires five hundred shots a minute, but it has a very restricted zone of dispersion.—It is true that it can be used for sweeping fire, but in this case what was its objective ? Excellent for the defence of a bridge, it is not nearly so well adapted to open a passage across. Strengthened by machine-guns, your powers are at once increased, and you are able to extend

\* “To pursue on lines parallel to the enemy's retreat is usually most effective method for mounted troops, who, on account of their mobility, may repeatedly attack the flanks of the enemy, with the ultimate intention of anticipating him at some point on his line of retreat.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 242.

your sphere of action.—Having captured the section of hostile guns, you should have sent back word immediately to the O.C., B regiment.—In all probability he would have revised his plans, and given you fresh orders,—as, for example: “Intercept the enemy’s retreat towards the La Membrolle road so as to allow the infantry to manœuvre against his wings.”—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

With regard to machine-guns :—You capture two belonging to the enemy and think you can use them.—A pure hypothesis!—For the purposes of a scheme, however, it may perhaps be admitted.

It may be useful to recall briefly the type and equipment of the machine-guns in actual use in the German Army.

Our neighbours use guns of the Maxim pattern. The weapon rests on a tray which is itself carried on a wheeled limber ; it can therefore be fired like a gun. Or the tray can be lifted off the limber. In this case it can be easily carried like a hand-barrow, and has the appearance of a stretcher.—The gun has a vertical and lateral fire, and is served standing, kneeling, or lying down.—The complement of men to each gun is one N.C.O., two gunners, and two ammunition-carriers.—The limber is made in two distinct parts, and two men sit on each carriage.—The cover of the limber can be used as a shield.—The cartridge belts, each containing twenty-five cartridges, are packed six in a box.—The boxes fit into a large

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case in the front limber, this case can also be carried separately, like a stretcher.

These machine-guns can fire either by bursts of twenty-five or by continuous fire.—The Regulations make a distinction between (A) fire directed on one point, and (B) searching fire.—Fire is seldom opened at ranges beyond three-quarters of a mile (1,320 yards).—The gun heats rapidly and requires frequent cleaning.—Germany possesses a thoroughly organized and powerful equipment of machine-guns.

The detachments are constituted as follows :

### *Strength :*

- 1 Captain.
- 3 Subalterns.
- 13 N.C.O's.
- 54 Privates.

### *Equipment :*

- 6 Machine-guns drawn by 4 horses.
- 3 Ammunition waggons drawn by 4 horses.
- 2 Waggons drawn by 4 horses.
- 1 Forage cart drawn by 4 horses.
- 1 Luggage cart drawn by 2 horses.
- 1 Ration cart drawn by 2 horses

The equipment is somewhat cumbersome and heavy.

Machine-gun detachments form an integral part of all infantry and, to a very considerable extent, of most cavalry divisions.

All the above information is to be found in books, but as the question is much to the fore, it is well that these facts should be recalled.

To return to the exercise :

The Director's solution of Incident No. 2 is worth noting.—It must not be forgotten that we are in unusually enclosed ground (neighbourhood of Angers) and therefore the machine-guns have no field of fire except the line of the bridge <sup>over the</sup> ~~at~~ Brionneau.—You are 450 yards (about a quarter of a mile) from the bridge, and are opposed by a narrow and invisible line.—The danger is too great to run.—If you are to wait till your machine-guns have cleared a passage, you would necessarily have to expend an enormous amount of ammunition, but even then you would not be certain of success, and what is more serious, you would run the risk of being kidnapped by the hostile squadron you left at Castle Molière.

Employ your machine-guns as the mobile defensive pivot of your offensive manœuvre.—In other words, remain a cavalry soldier and act promptly. The machine-guns, far from retarding your progress, should give you wings.—THE COLONEL.

### No. 3.

*Squadron Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Sedan.

*Director.*—Major D.

*Taking Part.*—The Captains and Subalterns of the first half regiment.

*Rendezvous* (March 15, 1 p.m.).—Torcy.

## PROBLEM C.

*General Idea.*—An infantry regiment is marching from Sedan to Flize to intercept a hostile detachment of all arms reported to be advancing from Mézières. The regiment is accompanied by a troop of divisional cavalry for immediate protective duties and a squadron of dragoons.

Reconnaissances have been sent out, and distant protection is assured by other troops.

*Special Idea.*—At 1 p.m. the regiment is at Sedan.—Order to the O.C. squadron (extract from “Operation Orders”): “The regiment is marching on Flize by the Mézières road.—Hold the bridges over the Canal and the Bar at Pont-à-Bar as quickly as possible.”—THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Report.*

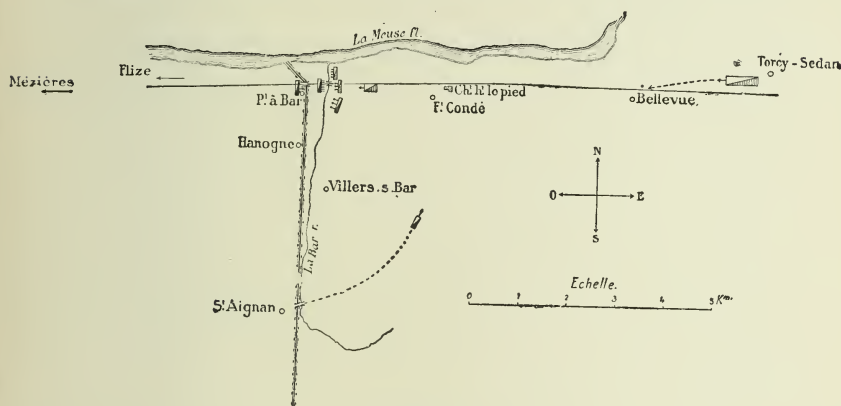
*Squadron Scheme.*—Captain S: Seizing and holding a bridge.

*Execution* (1 p.m.).—The squadron is assembled at Torcy.—I intend to make for Pont-à-Bar as rapidly as possible and capture the bridges by a surprise. Route—“Mézières—Douchéry road—the old lane by Condé Farm.”—I give the order, therefore: “Sergeant Y and four men, patrol ahead. Squadron, trot”—then—“gallop!”

*First Incident* (6.30 p.m.).—I am at Condé Farm. Information sent in by the leading patrol: “Two



hostile troops, dismounted, hold the bridges at Pont-à-Bar,\* the roads across are barricaded.”—As there are but two hostile troops I decide to attack at once dismounted with the whole



MAP 28.

of my force except one troop, which will remain mounted in reserve, ready to charge.

\* “It is not admissible that a cavalry division should be brought to a standstill at a bridge by a few shots fired by a detachment or by an infantry picket. . . . How much more readily would the men told off to tear down the barricade double up to it if they had a bayonet at the end of their rifles! They could then welcome a hand-to-hand fight as an advantage, and not as a disaster. . . . The Germans, desirous at all costs to give their dismounted action the character of the offensive which characterizes all their operations, have given their cavalry a ‘bayonet knife,’ which will enable them to push home a dismounted attack.”—CAPITAINE LOIR : *Cavalerie*.

“Even if it were more seldom employed than the infantry bayonet, it would still find its use in the encouragement of the offensive spirit in dismounted actions.”—GENERAL PELET NARBONNE.

“Light cavalry shall be armed with a bayonet, the sheath of

I give the order therefore to the squadron: "First three troops, dismounted action, one man from each rank to hold the horses.—The led horses to take cover at Condé Farm."—I move on ahead still dismounted, under shelter of the trees, as far as the footpath to Villers-sur-Bar, to reconnoitre the ground.—The three Troop Leaders of the foremost troops are with me.—Order to the two first troops: "Work north of the road.—Objectives: First troop, the canal bridge; second troop, the enemy as far as the Meuse." To the third troop: "Objectives—First,—the bridges.—Second, — the enemy south of Pont-à-Bar.—Each troop will regulate its own fire.—Go!"

The men are brought up by troops at the double under cover.—I continue the advance, and when about 350 yards from the enemy give the order to open fire.

*Second Bound.*—My men north of the road reach the River Bar south of the road, — The third troop is unable to advance, as the ground in front of the bridge is scoured by the enemy's fire.—I order the fourth troop to charge, but it is unable to cross the bridge owing to the wire obstructions.—The fight continues.—

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which shall be attached to the sabre-belt, as it is in the equipment of dragoons."—NAPOLÉON.

"DRAGOON.—So called from the dragon-head which adorned the muzzle of the musket with which they were originally armed.—Dragoons were trained to fight both on horseback and on foot."—BENNETT-GOLDNEY: *Weapons of the Tudor and Stuart Periods.*

Order to the fourth troop: "Make for the Hannogne bridge, move down to Pont-à-Bar along the left bank of the river.

*Second Incident* (7.30 p.m.).—The fourth troop is prevented from crossing the bridge at Hannogne. A hostile troop from the direction of Saint Aignan has been to the Condé Farm and dispersed my horses.\*

The infantry come up.—(End of exercise.)  
CAPTAIN S.

*Criticism.*—So far as dismounted action goes, a brilliant attempt, although the climax was somewhat of a tragedy.—Your fourth troop in reserve might have been better employed in protecting your led horses; but this is a detail.—You ought not to have attacked; it is impossible to carry a well-defended bridge.

Bonaparte, at the head of Angereau's troops, attempted this in vain at the bridge at Arcole.—A body of 3,000 men from Ronco followed the further bank of the Alpone, and on its appearance the Austrians at once decamped.—This is my only criticism.—From Bellevue, without waiting for further information, you should have sent out a troop towards the bridge, you could then have taken the other three round through Saint Aignan to Hannogne and Pont-à-Bar.—THE DIRECTOR.

Quite so!—Either wait for information, hoping

\* "When acting dismounted, special precautions must be taken to safeguard the flanks."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 284.

for the best, or make straight for your objective. In the latter case, meeting with opposition, you endeavoured to retreat, but it was too late; you were playing into the enemy's hands.—Your objective was the Bar bridge, what more did you want? You should have manœuvred as if it were occupied. Here we have the whole art of war in a nutshell.—  
THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

## No. 4.

*Squadron Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Vouziers.

*Director.*—Major D.

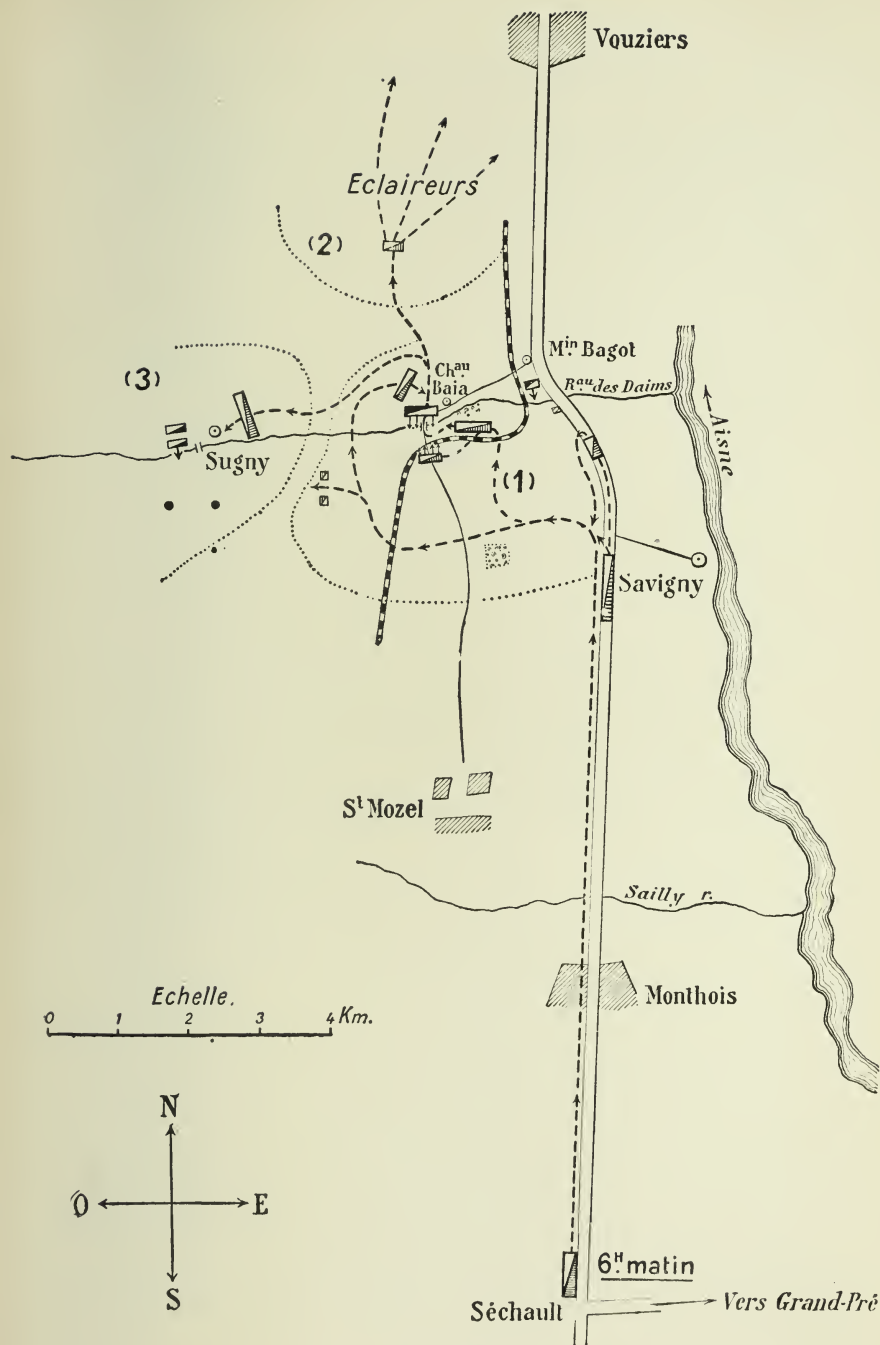
*Taking Part.*—The Officers of the second half regiment.

*Rendezvous* (April 10, 7 a.m.).—Monthois (on the return march from the camp at Châlons).

## PROBLEM D.

*General Idea* (1870).—The third and fourth German armies on the morning of August 26. At 6 a.m. the fifth division of Prussian cavalry marching from Sainte-Menehould to Vouziers receives the order to change direction, and march upon Grand-Pré in search of the army of Châlons, which is moving from the Suippe upon Metz, and is known to be still in the neighbourhood of Chesne.

*Special Idea* (6 a.m.).—At Séchault the cavalry division turns off from the main road and makes for Senuc and Grand-Pré.—Order to Captain D, com-



MAP 29.

manding the fourth squadron: "Move off with your squadron in reconnaissance towards Vouziers.—Information to be sent to Senuc—Grand-Pré."—THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Report.*

*Squadron Scheme.* — Reconnoitring squadron. Holding a river.

*Execution.*—At 6 a.m. I leave Séchault with my squadron.—I halt at the southern boundary of the wood a mile and a quarter north of Monthois.—I consult my map.—Two streams—the Saily and the Daims—obstruct my forward movement. The Saily is undefended.—The Daims will have to be manœuvred.—At 7 a.m. I am at Tafna.—I have decided upon my plan of action.—I intend to seize the approach to Baïa by means of a demonstration on Bagot Mill from the Vouziers main road towards Sugny.—One troop, dismounted, will make a frontal attack on Baïa.—The scouts will cross upstream as best they can, and will return along the left bank.—I move rapidly down the main road to the Savigny cross-road.—A few of the enemy's mounted men are seen on the high ground; they fall back.—There is not a moment to lose.—Orders to No. 1 Troop: "Direction, Bagot Mill via the main road.—Go on as far as the turning, show yourselves, leave a few men as a screen, then get under cover.—Rally upon me at the gallop."

7.15 a.m.—I follow a sunk path as far as the



railway.—Order to Lieut. Y (in charge of the scouts marching as a troop ahead of the squadron): “Direction, Sugny; cross the stream half-way between this and Sugny, then move upon Château Baïa at the gallop.”—I cross the railway, and manage to slip along the bank of the stream under cover.

7.20 a.m.—Order to No. 2 Troop: “Follow the path from Saint Morel to Castle Baïa as far as the high ground.—On arrival, dismounted action; objective, the bridge.”

*First Incident* (7.30 a.m.).—The road across the bridge is obstructed, a troop of the enemy is in rear of the barricade and defending it dismounted. No. 2 Troop opens fire.—I am with the rest of the squadron concealed some 650 yards upstream.

7.35 a.m.—The scouts gallop up on the far side of the stream and capture the hostile troop; the barricade is demolished, and I cross over with my squadron.

*Second Incident* (7.40 a.m.).—A troop of the enemy appears towards Bagot Mill.—No. 3 Troop charges it, and then rallies upon us.

Order to the scouts: “Reconnoitre towards Vouziers.—Information to be forwarded to Baïa, then to Senuc—Grand-Pré.”—Order to No. 2 Troop: “Hold Baïa bridge (northern end) from the southern bank.”—I gallop to Sugny with the remainder of the squadron (three troops).—(End of the scheme.)—CAPTAIN D.

*Criticism.*—You knew nothing of the enemy’s

dispositions.—You were not even aware whether the enemy held the river ; but you avoided the mistake of waiting for information.\*—I am all the more pleased, as up till now you are the one and only officer who has done so.—You entrusted your manœuvre to Lieut. Y.—You can evidently trust him thoroughly.—Had he not justified your confidence your manœuvre would have miscarried, which might have been serious.—THE DIRECTOR.

I endorse, without any reservation, the working of your scouts, as well as their formation into a separate troop.—You had to get some men across a dangerous stream with steep banks.—It was their particular business as scouts.†—While engaged in a

\* “THE POWER TO MANŒUVRE. — Two Mamelukes could defeat three French horsemen because they were better armed, better mounted, and more skilful ; 100 French horse have nothing to fear from 100 Mamelukes, 300 would defeat a similar number, and 1,000 French would defeat 1,500 Mamelukes, so immense is the influence of tactics, order, and the advantage of manœuvre.”—NAPOLEON.

† “We know that scouting, to be effective, must be carried out by specialists. It demands natural keenness of sight, a deer-stalker’s eye, initiative, resource, coolness, and endurance—qualities which can only be secured by a rigorous selection of the most fitted. It should be the duty of every regiment to organize its own body of scouts, to grant them certificates, and on mobilization to recommend the most efficient for service with the staff, as well as with the army itself. It would be a good thing to re-engage them, give them the rank of N.C.O’s, and to mount them on the strongest and most willing horses, which should be replaced every year by a sufficient number of blood animals from the remount department. The simpler service of keeping contact can be performed by ordinary patrols.”—DE NÉGRER.

difficult manœuvre you send them out ahead.—One word is sufficient.—It is impossible to imagine yourself giving detailed instructions to your patrols at Baïa.—Your squadron, the tactical fighting unit, remained compact and was well handled.

In this case, from the moment you left the Savigny cross-roads on your mission, the success of the manœuvre depended upon the rapidity of its execution. A moment's hesitation and the enemy would have galloped up from Bagot Mill and Sugny.

—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

Are you convinced it was necessary to hold the Daims stream between Sugny and its junction with the Aisne?—Was it essential to your reconnaissance?—One bridge, that at Baïa, if held by your squadron, would have sufficed for the safe transmission of information.—THE COLONEL.

You can never be certain of holding a passage over a river unless you also hold the neighbouring bridges and fords over which the hostile cavalry can easily manœuvre and capture your own passage across.—

THE GENERAL.

## DEFENSIVE-OFFENSIVE MANŒUVRE.

### No. 5.

(The half regiment is on its way home after “field firing” at Châlons.)

*Squadron Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Vouziers.

*Director.*—Major L.

## 174 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

*Taking Part.*—The Captains and Subalterns of the second half regiment.

*Rendezvous* (May 9, 2 p.m.).—A mile and a quarter south of Monthois on the Sainte-Menehould road.

### PROBLEM E.

*General Idea.*—A cavalry division, marching from Sainte-Menehould upon Vouziers, changes direction at Séchault and moves, via Montcheutin, upon Senuc and Grand-Pré, in search of a numerous hostile force of all arms advancing from the north and reported to be in the neighbourhood of Busancy and Le Chesne.

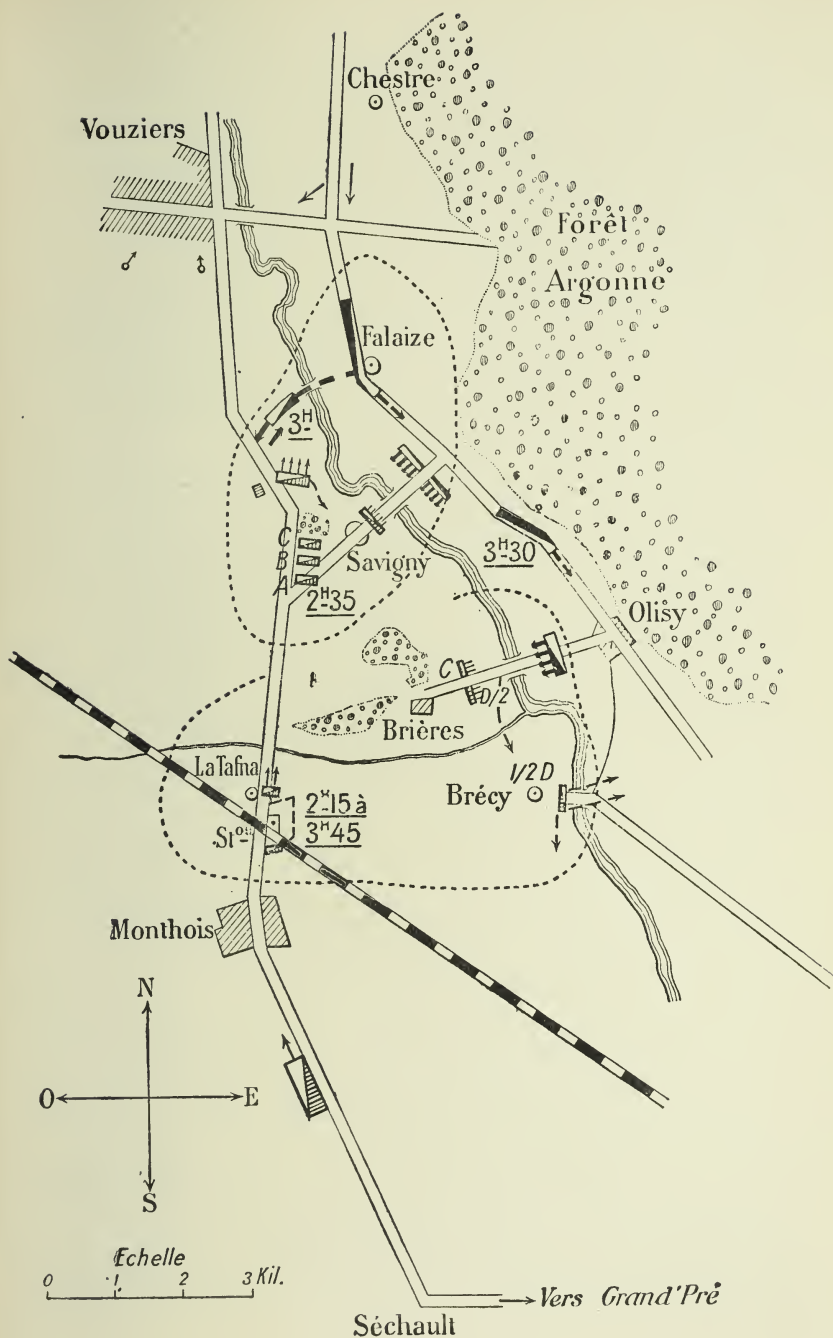
*Special Idea* (1.15 p.m.).—The head of the division has changed direction at Séchault.—Order to Captain C: "Take your squadron, with the regimental pioneers, and destroy the railway and station at Monthois.—A regiment of the enemy's cavalry is reported in the vicinity of Vouziers on the right bank of the Aisne towards Chestre."—THE DIRECTOR.

(Handed in a sealed envelope at the commencement of the scheme to Captain C.)

### *Summary of Report.*

*Squadron Scheme.*—Captain C: Destruction of a railway.

*Execution* (1.15 p.m.).—My squadron, with the sappers, left the regiment at Séchault.—At 2 p.m.



MAP 30.

I am a mile and a quarter south of Monthois, which has been searched by the troop in advanced guard. I consult my map.—There is no information from Monthois.—I occupy the station.

2.15 p.m.—Order to Lieut. X: “See that the pioneers destroy the line and station.\*—I shall manœuvre so as to allow you a full hour and a half. Corporal A’s section at Tafna will be responsible for your immediate protection.”

North of the Sailly and towards Vouziers the ground varies considerably.—On the left bank of the Aisne there is a barren tableland.—Should the enemy advance that way I shall hold the Sailly.—On the right bank of the Aisne there is the valley bounded by the Forest of Argonne.—The enemy can cross from the right to the left bank: (1) at Vouziers, (2) at Savigny, (3) by the bridge at Olizy, or (4) at Brécy.

Should the hostile cavalry come upon me by the right bank I can hold it up at the bridges by dismounted action; it is a possible contingency.—I give the following orders therefore:

\* “On railways, the easiest portions to attack, in hasty demolitions, are the bridges.”—*Manual of Field Engineering*, p. 94.

“HASTY DEMOLITION WITHOUT EXPLOSIVES.—When a railway is to be interrupted, the first step in every case is to sever or block the main lines of rails. The most important technical tools should also be removed, as well as all the individuals entrusted with the working of the railway, and the signals—first the electric, and then the visual—should be destroyed. Of the permanent way, points and crossings are the most important parts, etc.”—*Ibid.*, p. 97.



1. To the scouts : “ Gallop to Savigny. Barricade the bridge and the eastern approach to the village ; dismounted action.”

2. To Sergeant Y and two men : “ Patrol towards Vouziers.—Give me immediate warning if the enemy crosses the Vouziers bridge.—Information to be forwarded to the main road towards Savigny.”—I trot with the squadron by the main road to the heights above Savigny and take up a concealed position behind some trees, whence I can watch the Aisne valley as far as Vouziers. The meadows near the wooden bridge at Falaize are partly under water.

*First Incident* (2.35 p.m.).—The scouts are at the Savigny bridge, which has been obstructed with wire.—I am still with my squadron on the heights above. I catch sight of a hostile cavalry column coming out of Falaize towards Olizy.—It is at the trot, and I estimate its strength at about three squadrons.—Order to the Captain (second in command), Nos. 1, 2, and 3 Troops : “ Go to Savigny. Dismounted action.”—To No. 4 Troop : “ You will form a defensive flank and watch Falaize in the direction of Vouziers.”—I remain five minutes in observation.—I am under the impression that the whole of the hostile column has left Falaize.—I gallop to Savigny.

*Second Incident* (2.50 p.m.).—The enemy's column is marching down the path to Savigny and is fired upon by the squadron.—Two hostile squadrons

dismount.—The third turns about and retires upon Falaize.

*Third Incident* (3 p.m.).—A hostile squadron is leaving Falaize apparently in the direction of Bagot Mill.—The land is very marshy.—No. 4 Troop opens fire at 1,100 yards.—The enemy turns about and falls back upon Savigny.—No. 4 Troop returns to the village.—Order to No. 4 Troop: “Go to the bridge at Olizy.”

*Fourth Incident* (3.30 p.m.).—We are fighting at the bridge at Savigny.—Three troops, dismounted, and the scouts against two hostile squadrons.—No. 4 Troop is nearing the bridge at Olizy.—The hostile squadron from Falaize is also pushing on towards Olizy.—Order to No. 3 Troop: “Go to the bridges at Olizy and Brécy.”

*Fifth Incident* (3.45 p.m.).—Situation.—The scouts and Nos. 1 and 2 Troops are fighting, dismounted, under cover of hedges, etc. They are firing at a range of 550 yards, at the road over the bridge which has been obstructed with barbed wire. They are opposed by two squadrons striving to gain possession of the bridge.—At Olizy two troops are holding the bridge against a hostile squadron. I have held out for an hour and a half.—The railway and station at Monthois have been destroyed. I break off the fight at Savigny.—To the scouts: “Retire on <sup>La</sup>Tafna by the main road.”—To the squadron: “Retire upon Brière, rally at Brécy, etc.” (End of scheme.)—CAPTAIN C.

*Criticism.*—You were dealing with a regiment. Dismounted action was your only chance.—You realized at once that, on the banks of the Saily, or at the bridges over the Aisne, you could only fight to advantage dismounted.—You appear to have placed great reliance upon the enemy's desire to oblige you by supposing he would descend upon Monthois by the right bank of the Aisne when you knew there were bridges ahead available for crossing. Events proved you were right, so it was just as well you were prepared for this manœuvre, however improbable it appeared.—I have known a similar instance before.—Only another proof that in war, as in everything else, it is the unexpected that happens.—THE DIRECTOR.

You sent your troop of scouts (twenty-five rifles) to hold the Savigny bridge.—They would, of course, be more expert in fixing wire entanglements across a bridge than ordinary troops.—They are also better shots, more capable of holding their own, and not so likely to be intimidated.—Their presence at the Savigny bridge must certainly have disconcerted the enemy.

You are told that in war maps are not always available. — Quite true ;\* but were this the case

\* Thus, the German staff maps of France, particularly those east of Paris, actually indicated roads which in July, 1870, had not yet been marked upon any map issued by the French War Office.—HOOPER : *Sedan*.

you would push on haphazard, straight ahead, without a thought of manœuvring.

I don't believe that it is possible either to carry out the offensive or to manœuvre successfully without maps.—Those who possess them must know how to study and make use of them. They alone can hope for definite success.—We are now working with this one end in view.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

#### No. 6.

(After visiting the battlefield of Beaumont.)

*Squadron Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Stenay.

*Director.*—The Major.

*Taking Part.*—The Captains and Subalterns of the second half regiment.

*Rendezvous* (June 5, 3 p.m.).—Beauclair, three and a quarter miles west of Stenay.

#### PROBLEM F.

*General Idea.*—A force of all arms having crossed the Meuse at Stenay is moving east. To protect itself in rear it leaves one battalion and a squadron on the left bank of the river.

*Special Idea* (3 p.m.).—The battalion takes up a position towards Laneuville, east of the woods at Dieulet.

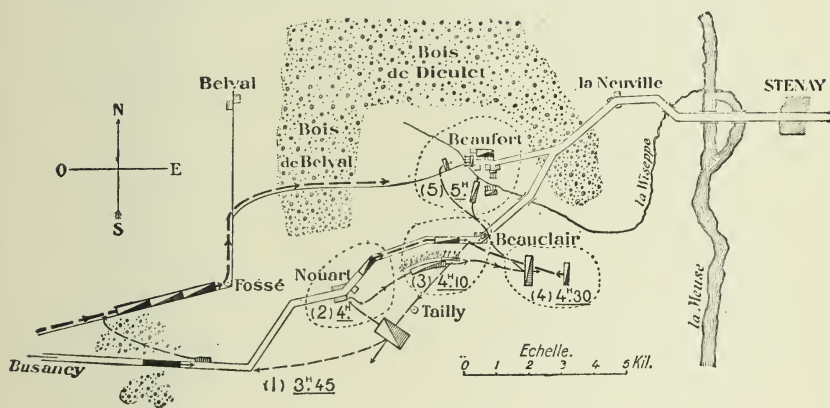
Order to the cavalry: "Move to the west of the woods.—A cavalry regiment from Stenay is

reported to be at Busancy. Ascertain its line of advance and hold it back.—Information to Laneuville.”—THE DIRECTOR.

(Handed in a sealed envelope at the commencement of the scheme to Captain D.)

## Summary of Scheme.

*Squadron Scheme.*—Captain D: Collecting information,—and its value.



MAP 31.

*Execution.*—From Busancy the hostile cavalry regiment can march upon Stenay (1) from the south via Villers-devant-Dun ;—(2) straight ahead down the main road from Vouziers ;—(3) by the north through the Belval woods.—I move rapidly to the west of Tailly.—Order to the scouts : “ Reconnoitre towards Busancy.—Information to be forwarded here.”

*First Incident* (3.45 p.m.).—Report from the

scouts: "Three of the enemy's squadrons passed down the Fossé-Belval road at 3.15 p.m.—Fifty mounted men are on the main road to Stenay, and are now passing through Nouart."—I send back word to the battalion.—I intend to make for Beaufort at the far end of the Belval woods as rapidly as possible.—On my way I shall surround the two hostile troops.—I give the following order therefore: "No. 1 Troop, gallop to Beauclair, rally there, and rejoin me towards Nouart."—With the remainder of the squadron I proceed down the slope directly upon Nouart.—I shall sweep round thence upon Beauclair.

*Second Incident* (4 p.m.).—I reach the outskirts of Nouart from the south.—Report sent in by Sergeant Y: "There is one squadron at least of the enemy in Nouart.—I have seen it; it is marching upon Beauclair."—I decide that I am not in sufficient strength to push onward, so turn about and move in the direction of Beauclair along the heights parallel to the road.

*Third Incident* (4.10 p.m.).—I command the road to Stenay.—I can see the hostile force 220 yards away making for Beauclair.—Order to the two leading troops: "Dismounted action, etc."—The enemy gallops off towards Beauclair.—I continue my march parallel to the road.

*Fourth Incident* (4.30 p.m.).—The hostile force has passed through Beauclair, and left again in the direction of Stenay.—No. 1 Troop has avoided



them, and rejoins me.—I pursue, and make a successful charge about 1,100 yards east of Beauclair. There were only a couple of the enemy's troops. I assemble my squadron, and march on towards Beaufort.

*Fifth Incident* (5 p.m.).—The three hostile squadrons are in the village.—The troop of scouts is at the western fringe of the Belval woods, and is going to manœuvre thence to the north.—I am fired upon.—Order to No. 1 Troop: "Dismounted action. Objective—the barricade on the Beaufort - Beauclair road."—To No. 2 Troop: "Move off by the north and west of Beaufort."

With the two remaining troops I gallop towards the centre of the village, which has not been barricaded.—We cross the Wiseppe and reach Beaufort. We gallop through the village, where we come upon the enemy's led horses; the men were lying down on both sides of the road.—(End of scheme.)  
—CAPTAIN D.

*Criticism.*—You based your initial manœuvre upon extremely reliable information. As you reached Nouart you received intelligence which you had not asked for, and as it was of a contradictory nature you gave up your original plan. This led to your complete undoing, and upon that I will dwell no further.—In future, when once you have come to a decision, make straight for your objective, and never allow yourself to be influenced or turned aside by casual information, more particularly when, as in

this case, it was not sought for.—I once made a similar mistake in identical circumstances, and I then vowed I would never be caught in that way again.

You might have captured the two troops, then galloped to Beaufort and surprised the enemy's squadrons as they came out of the woods.—THE DIRECTOR.

Having once decided upon your plan, you should have sent out a patrol ahead in the direction of Nouart-Beauclair (see Regulations for Service in the Field, Article 24).—It might have been able to have indicated a better line of advance—that is its purpose.—This criticism, however, in no way detracts from the importance of the point you desire to emphasize as to the value of information.\* During his campaign in Gaul, Cæsar, who had spent several days in pursuit of the Helvetians, at last came up with them towards evening encamped at the foot of a hill.—He gave orders to one of his lieutenants, Labienus, I think, to make a night march to the rear of the enemy, and take up a position on the hill above them.—He was to attack the enemy in rear while Cæsar met him in front.—Cæsar began his forward movement, but received a report half-way that the heights were held by the Helvetians and not by Labienus.—Cæsar halted.—In the morn-

\* "The Russian cavalry, unable to pierce the screen, found it impossible to obtain any reliable information. So completely were they baffled in this respect, that General Kuropatkin believed that on his side he had only to deal with an unimportant demonstration."—DE NÉGRIER : *Russo-Japanese War*.

ing he found the enemy had decamped.—It was a false report ; as a matter of fact, Labienus actually held the heights.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

### No. 7.

*Squadron Scheme.*—Neighbourhood of Sedan. Machine-guns and cavalry.

*Director.*—The Major.

*Taking Part.*—The Captains of the second half regiment.

*Rendezvous* (June 20, 8 a.m.).—Daigny after manœuvres.

### PROBLEM G.

*General Idea.*—A cavalry regiment is reconnoitring down the right bank of the Meuse in the neighbourhood of Sedan.—The main body is at Mouzon, and its line of march is—Mouzon—Douzy—Saint Menges.

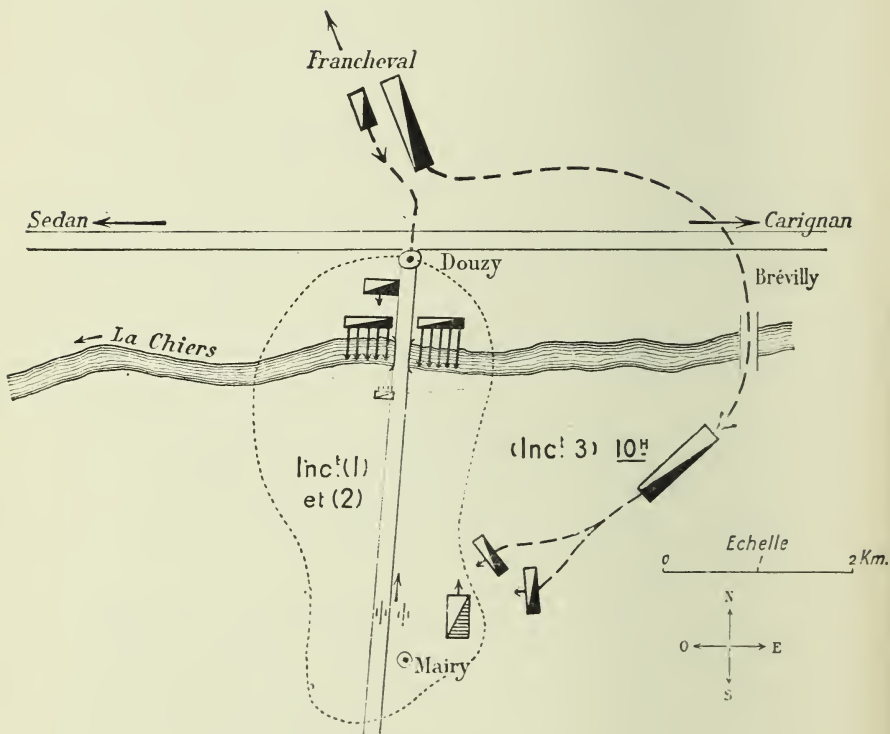
*Special Idea* (8 a.m.).—The regiment is on the Daigny training-ground.—It has thrown out detachments towards Sedan, Givonne, etc.—Threatened by a superior cavalry force from the north, the C.O. decides to retire.

Order to Captain L : “The regiment is about to retire by Douzy towards Mouzon.—Your squadron will act as rear-guard.—To enable the detachments still out to rejoin, you will hold the bridge over the Chiers at Douzy till twelve noon.”—THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Scheme.*

*Squadron Scheme.*—Captain L : Rear-guard action.

*Execution* (8 a.m.).—The regiment moves off at



MAP 32.

the trot to Douzy via Lamécourt.—The squadron follows in “rear-guard.”

First bound and halt, north-west boundary of the Chevalier wood ; second bound, to the Rulle ; third

bound, Douzy.—I reach Douzy at 8.45 a.m., and am given two machine-guns.

I intend to hold the ground in rear of the Chiers bridge.—There is a position towards Mairy from which the machine-guns can enjoy a splendid field of fire as far as the bridge, some 1,100 yards away. Order to the troop of scouts: "Prepare an entanglement across the road over the bridge.—The wires are only to be drawn taut, and fastened at the last moment.—Patrols to the north and west of Douzy." Order to the squadron: "Dismount!"

To the machine-gun sections: "Take up a position of readiness towards Mairy.—Objective, the bridge.—The dismounted squadron supporting the guns is concealed behind the houses nearest the bridge.—Corporal A's section is sent out in patrol towards Brévilley."

*First Incident* (9 a.m.).—A hostile squadron attempts to advance from Douzy upon Mairy.—It is fired upon by the scouts; it dismounts and takes up a fire position along the banks of the Chiers, under cover of the houses.

*Second Incident* (9.30 a.m.).—Report from Brévilley: "A hostile regiment is marching upon Douzy."—Almost at the same moment that I receive the report the regiment which has already reached the village attempts to come out.—The machine-guns open fire; the enemy dismount and begin a fire fight; but, in spite of the most strenuous effort, is unable to reach the bridge.

*Third Incident* (10 a.m.).—Section A comes in at full gallop from Brévilly, where three hostile squadrons have crossed the Chiers.—They charge and capture us in Mairy.—(End of scheme.)—CAPTAIN L.

*Criticism.*—The defence of the Douzy bridge was suitable work for the machine-guns ; but as the mounted arm, your duty was to prevent the hostile cavalry from outmanœuvring you, by turning you through Brévilly, and finally capturing you in addition to your machine-guns.—In my opinion you should have left your guns and,—if you like,—sent your scouts to Mairy.—Their objective would have been the bridge.—You should have taken your squadron to Brévilly, and barricaded the road across the bridge there.—You would thus have prepared an ambush.—You were operating offensively.—In the first incident you should have fallen back on Douzy and captured the hostile squadron.—In the second incident you might have risked attacking the hostile regiment in rear at Douzy.—If you thought this plan too foolhardy, you might at least have defended the bridge at Brévilly from the left bank.—What you actually did was to remain with the machine-guns, pinning the whole of your faith upon them.—This was a great mistake.—You were in the dual capacity of cavalryman and gunner.—You should have acted accordingly.—THE DIRECTOR.

Certainly ! It is absurd to insist upon the theory



and practice of the offensive in defence if you are to remain glued to a position\* because you have been given the additional advantage of a few machine-guns.—You must remember in all such cases as this we are considering, the chief object of your machine-guns, which are regarded as powerful defensive weapons, is to support your manœuvre, which must always be offensive!—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

What was the object you had in view?—To favour the action of your machine-guns?—What stood in your way?—The hostile cavalry.—Then don't wait for it; search for it, and manœuvre it; while your machine-guns do their own work.—THE COLONEL.

\* “A leader still prepared to put his trust to-day in the value of positions merely invites defeat.—Against modern weapons, mobility alone offers any means of escape from destruction.—The leader who persists in clinging to positions will certainly perish.”  
—DE NÉGRIER : *Russo-Japanese War*.

CHAPTER III  
SCHEMES FOR A HALF REGIMENT

OFFENSIVE MANŒUVRE.

No. 1.

*Half-Regiment Exercise.*

*Director.*—Lieut.-Colonel M.

*Taking Part.*—Field Officers and Squadron Leaders.

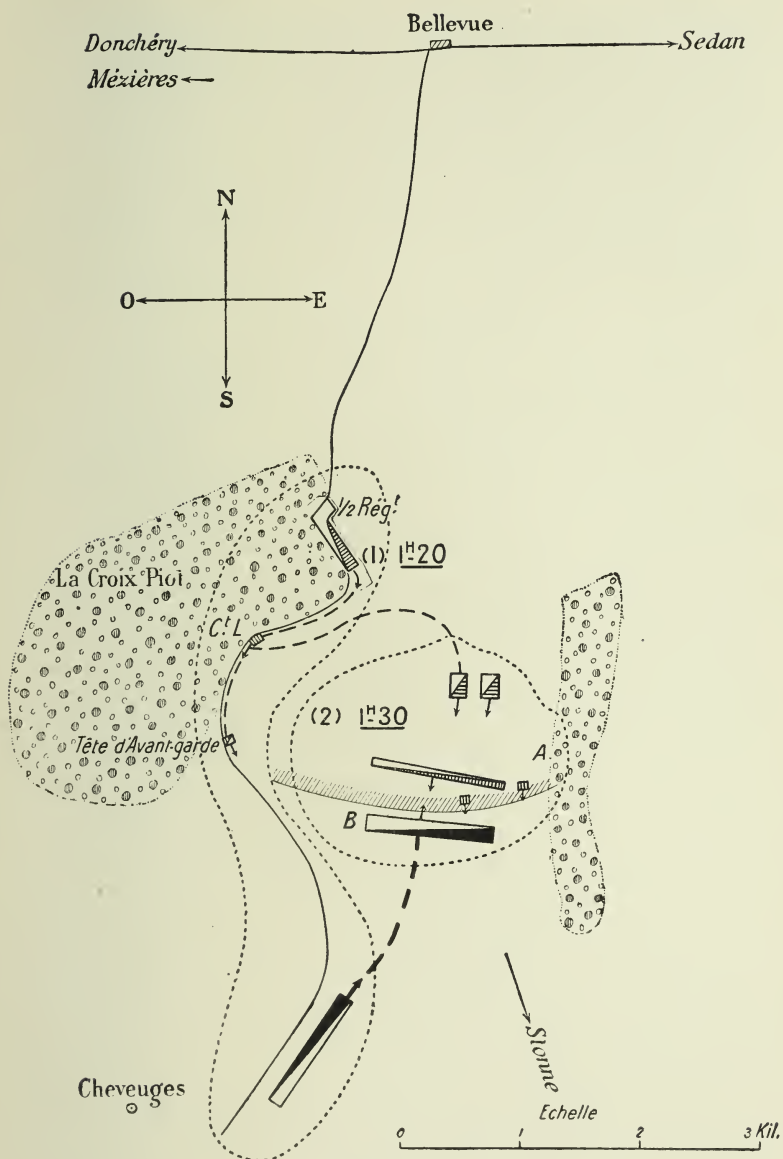
*Rendezvous* (October 24, 1 p.m.).—Bellevue.

PROBLEM A.

*General Idea.*—A cavalry division upon the left bank of the Meuse is on reconnaissance to the south of Mézières.—It is following the Chesne-Bulson road to Stonne, with the intention of intercepting a hostile cavalry division reported to be advancing from the south upon Sedan.

A half regiment is in advanced guard.

*Special Idea* (1 p.m.).—The half regiment (Major L) in advanced guard is at Bellevue.—The division has just reached Donchery.—Order from the G.O.C. division: “I have received information



MAP 33.

that the hostile division was at Stonne at 1 p.m. I intend to make for the Saint Quentin uplands by the Cheveuges-Bulson road with the utmost speed. I shall assemble the division there, and then move into action.—Assure my protection as I come out on to the plateau, and while I concentrate there.—  
THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Report.*

*Scheme for a Half Regiment* (Major L).—Position of leader and the transmission of orders.

*Execution* (1 p.m.).—The half regiment, which has closed on its advanced guard at Bellevue, is in observation, and about to resume its march.—Orders : Route—Chesne road,—the footpath from Cheveuges to Bulson.—A protective line will be held south of the point where the path reaches the level of the plateau towards Bulson.—Distant protection—Sergeant X and four men :—"Patrol ahead!"—Immediate protection : "First squadron, in advance, to the right and left.—Second squadron, in rear, to the right and left."—To the half regiment : "Advance by sections ; march!"—The first squadron has sent out a troop to act as vanguard.—(The main body of the division has sent forward a troop to La Croix-Piot, Cheveuges, and Saint Aignan.)

*First Bound.*—The heights of Cheveuges.

*First Incident* (1.20 p.m.).—The half regiment is at the trot, and 650 yards from the crest north of

Cheveuges ; I am at its head.—I hear several shots in the direction of the troop acting as vanguard. I halt the half regiment, and gallop forward along the road.—I am met by a despatch rider with the information : “ The enemy, half a regiment strong, is now galloping up the Chesne road ; it is about 700 yards from the top of the hill, north of Cheveuges.”—I turn back and gallop my half regiment across country towards the crest at point A.

*Second Incident* (1.30 p.m.).—I am close to the summit, my half regiment, formed in half mass, is 220 yards in rear.—A half regiment of the enemy’s cavalry appear on my right ; it has beaten me in the race for the crest, and charges my half regiment with the full advantage of the ground.—  
MAJOR L.

*Criticism.*—When you heard the firing towards Cheveuges you halted your half regiment and galloped alone in the direction of the vanguard. Consequently there was considerable delay in the transmission of orders, for you were out of sight, and therefore out of touch with your half regiment.\* Connecting files would not have been of much help, and had you been with the vanguard the delay would have been even worse.—A troop responsible for this duty is but a reserve for the patrols working ahead, and cannot stop the enemy’s pro-

\* “ The position of the Cavalry Leader is important, for he must be able to seize an opportunity for effective action when it occurs.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 240.

gress.—It is best to march at the head of your main body.—You are in advanced guard, march therefore as an advanced guard—*i.e.*, by successive bounds.—Six hundred yards from an eminence such as the ridge north of Cheveuges you should have been making for it across country; at the very least, you should have galloped up to it the moment you heard rifle fire.—You might have been some distance ahead, and in a position to see for yourself. This has all been dealt with in lectures, but the matter evidently requires further attention.—You are always being told you have to wrench the initiative from the enemy, and at the very first sign of his appearance you halt.—You needed information?—Nothing of the kind!—You made a grave mistake; the very nature of the ground warned you to go on.—You should have made certain of the crest, and allowed no one to get there before you.—THE DIRECTOR.

*Initialed, The Colonel.*

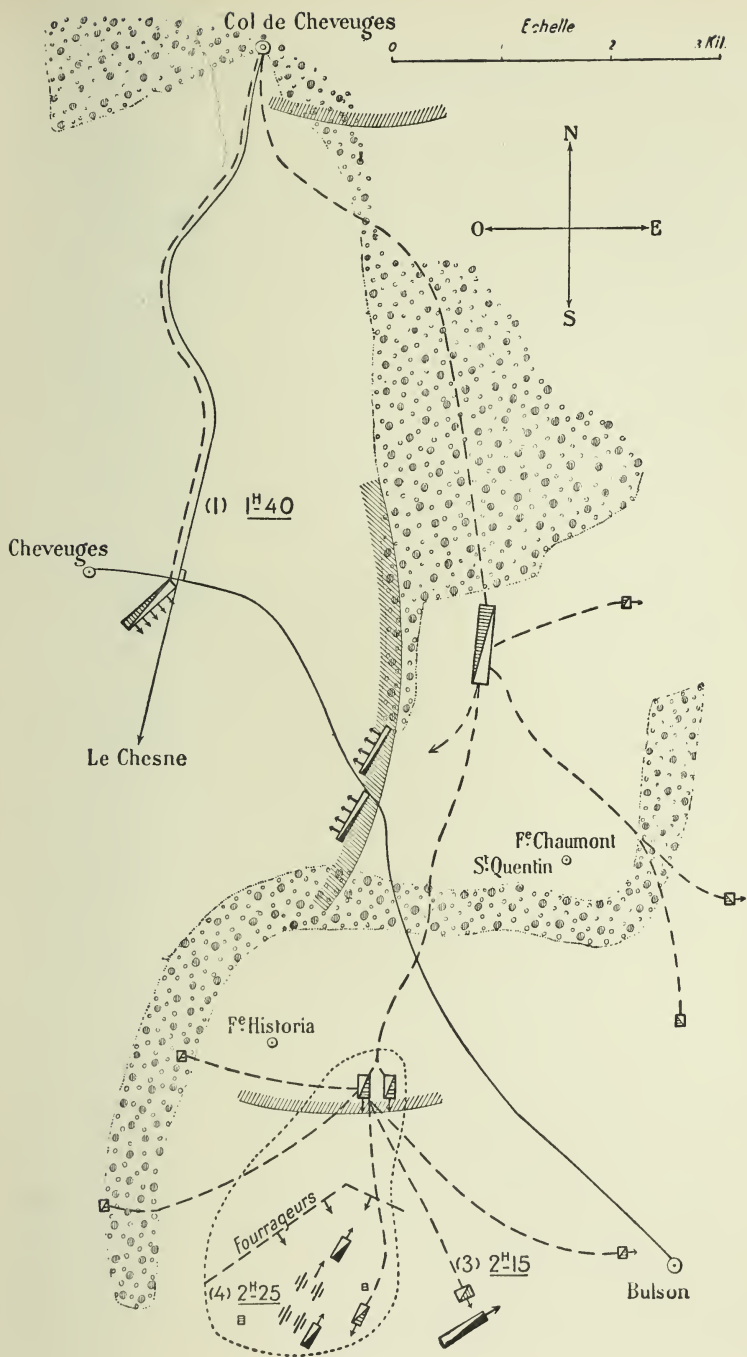
#### PROBLEM A (*continued*).

*Scheme for a Half Regiment (Major L).*—A half regiment acting as advanced guard to a cavalry division.—Holding high ground.

*Special Idea (1.30 p.m.).*—The half regiment is in rear of the crest north of Cheveuges.—No information has been sent in.—The march is resumed.

The road from Cheveuges to Bulson descends





MAP 34.

through a hollow as it reaches the Saint Quentin tableland.—I am obliged to form sections.—I intend to gain possession of the plateau by manœuvring. A detachment will go straight towards it,—*i.e.*, from the north-west,—while I lead the main body round by the Marfée woods so as to come out from the north and north-west.—I give the order, therefore, to Captain P:—"Make for the plateau with two troops by the Cheveuges-Bulson road."—With the remainder I gallop towards the Marfée woods.

*First Incident* (1.40 p.m.).—I hear firing on my right.—Captain P's detachment is engaged with a hostile squadron which has just taken up a position, dismounted, on the crest commanding the Cheveuges-Bulson road. I increase the pace and come out exactly in rear of the enemy.—MAJOR L.

*Criticism*.—As cavalry you acted as cavalry should. You wasted no time in ascertaining the situation on the plateau you desired to take before manœuvring.—In this way you compel circumstances to conform to your will.—The enemy appears and is pinned to his ground by Captain P.—You gave them no time to reconnoitre, but swooped down upon them.—In this case your group of manœuvre was the main body of your half regiment.—Quite rightly you led it yourself, with true cavalry spirit, upon a fixed objective.—Wisely you remained under safe cover.—THE DIRECTOR.

PROBLEM A (*continued*).

*Scheme for a Half Regiment.*—Major L: A half regiment acting as advanced guard to a cavalry division.—Protective measures when halted.

*Special Idea* (2 p.m.).—The plateau of the Chaumont Saint-Quentin Farm is clear.—The half regiment has breasted the ascent and forms column of troops.—The two Squadron Leaders are riding at my side. I give them the following orders: “Take up a protective line.—Point to be covered: the footpath from Cheveuges where it reaches the tableland.—The half regiment will move up to the crest south of the woods in front.”—I gallop ahead.—The necessary dispositions are carried out as required, automatically, without further command.—The line held at A resembles the figure 3.

*Third Incident* (2.15 p.m.).—I am at point A in rear of the crest line.—A hostile squadron is reported towards the south.—It is in column of troops at the walk about 2,000 yards away.—I give the order to No. 1 Troop: “Watch the squadron.”

*Fourth Incident* (2.25 p.m.).—A battery with a squadron in support is reported to be advancing from the clumps south-south-west some 2,000 yards distant.—Order to Captain P: “Remain here with two troops in observation.”—I start off myself to intercept the enemy with my six remaining troops and charge.—MAJOR L.

*Criticism.*—Your orders given at the outset were

clear and comprehensive, and you were able to take up your defensive line without further explanations. Only one difficulty remains—that of teaching the men to carry out their orders correctly.—They must have more practice.—Your solutions to Nos. 3 and 4 were not arrived at without giving due weight to your protective duties.—Good.—THE DIRECTOR.

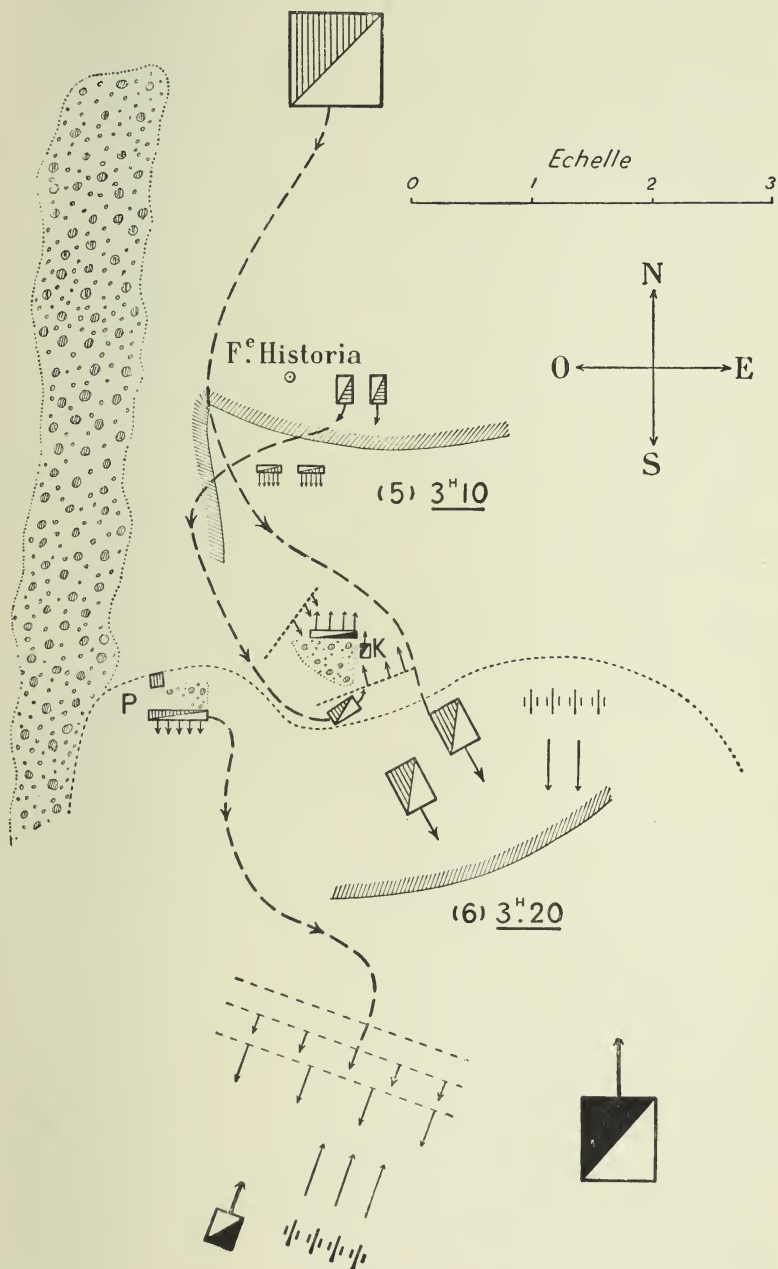
#### PROBLEM A (*continued*).

*Scheme for a Half Regiment.*—Major L: A half regiment acting as advanced guard to a cavalry division.—Final movements preliminary to an engagement.\*

*Special Idea.*—At 3 p.m. the half regiment has reached the first ridge south of Historia Farm facing towards Maisoncelles.—The troops in immediate protection are on the heights further south, half a mile away.—The G.O.C. division is with me. Order from the General: “The hostile division is just reaching Maisoncelles.—I shall advance with my right upon the woods marked O; I intend to attack the hostile division; you will form the advanced guard.”—Order to the half regiment: “Line of squadron columns, gallop.”—I incline to the right and make for clump K.

*Fifth Incident* (3.10 p.m.).—A squadron of the enemy is at the clump dismounted.—They

\* “Occasionally the advanced guard may be given a manœuvring rôle, and operate so as to deceive the enemy. . . .”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 274.



MAP 35.

## 200 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

hold its south-west salient.—Order to Nos. 1 and 2 Troops (Captain P):—"Dismounted action. Objective: the enemy."—I lead the half regiment round by the right at the gallop, following the crest line for concealment, and come out with ~~the~~<sup>one</sup> squadron in extended order and two troops in reserve on the flank and in rear of the enemy.

*Sixth Incident (3.20 p.m.).*—The half regiment is in rear of the wood K.—I am on the crest with the General.—The division is moving up to Historia Farm in double column of half regiments. The hostile cavalry division is visible below us, about three-quarters of a mile away, in fighting formation.—The General decides to at once take advantage of our higher ground and engage the enemy with his right.—He notifies the O.C. advanced guard that he has full liberty of action.

3.25.—Our division is just coming out when I catch sight of the hostile artillery unlimbering at a range of about three-quarters of a mile near point C.—It has two squadrons in escort to its right rear—I give the order to the first squadron: "To wood P; dismounted action.—Objective: the battery."—To the second squadron: "In reserve at the corner of the wood."—As our division moves forward it is met by a well-directed fire from the hostile batteries and its manoeuvre is frustrated.—(End of scheme.)—MAJOR L.

*Criticism.*—Your solution to Incident Five was nothing if not conventional.



*Sixth Incident.*—The division is going to manœuvre to its right, and the hostile artillery unlimbers on the same flank.\*—This was a grave menace to the success of the manœuvre.—You were far enough in advance to thwart it; and in similar cases the half regiment in advanced guard should always be prepared to undertake this particular duty.—You order dismounted action at a range of three-quarters of a mile.—For what purpose?—To inflict a trifling damage.—You should have charged the guns; you could not have hoped to capture them (the

\* “If, as has often been the case, artillery advances too boldly at the beginning of an action, cavalry will have frequent opportunities of achieving brilliant successes at its expense.—If hostile batteries attempt to carry out surprises such as those executed by the German artillery on August 16 and 18, 1870, the present-day German cavalry would certainly regard such batteries as their legitimate prey, and would immediately attack it, in spite of the loss it might sustain.”—VAN DER GOLTZ: *The Nation in Arms*.

“Weighing these words carefully, we must come to the conclusion that, when engaged by our powerful advanced guards, the Germans—as in 1870—won’t be able to resist the temptation to send forward strong masses of artillery insufficiently protected by their own weaker advanced guards.—As cavalry, it is our duty to keep our eyes open and make the most of our opportunities.”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

“The enemy’s battery was ridden down, the regiment striking against its left flank. The majority of the gunners and drivers were cut down and the guns silenced.—The regiment afterwards charged companies of infantry posted on the rising ground beyond the battery and on the further side of the road. It rode down two of these on the right flank, and dispersed most of the others.”—HALE: *Work of Cavalry in War*, “Battle of Rezonville, 1870.”

fate of the artillery and its division are bound together), but you might have galloped up to them even if the sole result was to mask their fire for a few minutes.—Never mind the escort, if they intervene, so much the better.—There will be a skirmish, and the guns will be effectually masked. I wish again especially to emphasize this particular duty of a half regiment in advanced guard when the division becomes engaged.—The Major in command should be left free to act upon his own initiative.\*—He should make it his business to seek out the guns and regard them as his only objective.—THE LIEUT.-COLONEL.

I do not think an order given to the advanced guard to act upon its own initiative is permissible.† It might have received the following order :—" Attack the guns, then rally so as to act as a reserve to the division."—THE COLONEL.

Very rightly you raise a question of principle. The Divisional Commander, who is with the advanced guard, controls the engagement, but we are now teaching the officer commanding a half regiment.—The Director has placed him in a situa-

\* Acting, as was usual in the German Army, on their own discretion, but still in the spirit of their instructions, the divisional and corps commanders at once sprang forward to support Gneisenau.—HOOPER : *Sedan*.

† " In order that these detachments may not be lost to the main body at the moment of collision, they must rejoin or support the attack on their own initiative the moment their task has been accomplished."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 274.

tion calling for individual initiative.—I am bound to admit I have very often seen an advanced guard during an engagement left entirely to its own devices.—I am therefore of the Director's opinion, that the advanced guard should hunt out the enemy's guns with the intention of attacking them at the psychological moment.—It would be a great mistake if this were not to be encouraged, and we must not allow the officer commanding to suppose he must wait for an order before doing so.—THE BRIGADIER-GENERAL.

## No. 2.

*Scheme for a Half Regiment.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part.*—Field Officers and Squadron Leaders.

*Rendezvous* (March 7, 2 p.m.).—Daigny Training Ground.

(After the conclusion of a tactical exercise against a flag enemy.)

## PROBLEM B.

*General Idea.*—The enemy,—A, (with the approximate strength of an infantry brigade), has arrived at Bouillon from the north, and is marching southwards via La Chapelle.—An infantry brigade (B) is marching on Douzy and Mouzon, by Vrigneaux-Bois and Daigny.—This movement is covered in front by a cavalry half regiment.

*Special Idea* (2 p.m.).—The half regiment attached to Brigade B is on the Daigny training-ground.—The Major in command receives the following order:—"La Falizette, March 7, 1 p.m. The Brigadier to the O.C. cavalry:—Hold the bridge at Douzy until the arrival of the brigade. I am sending you a section of cyclists which you will find at Daigny."—THE DIRECTOR.

(Given in a sealed envelope at the commencement of the scheme to Major T.)

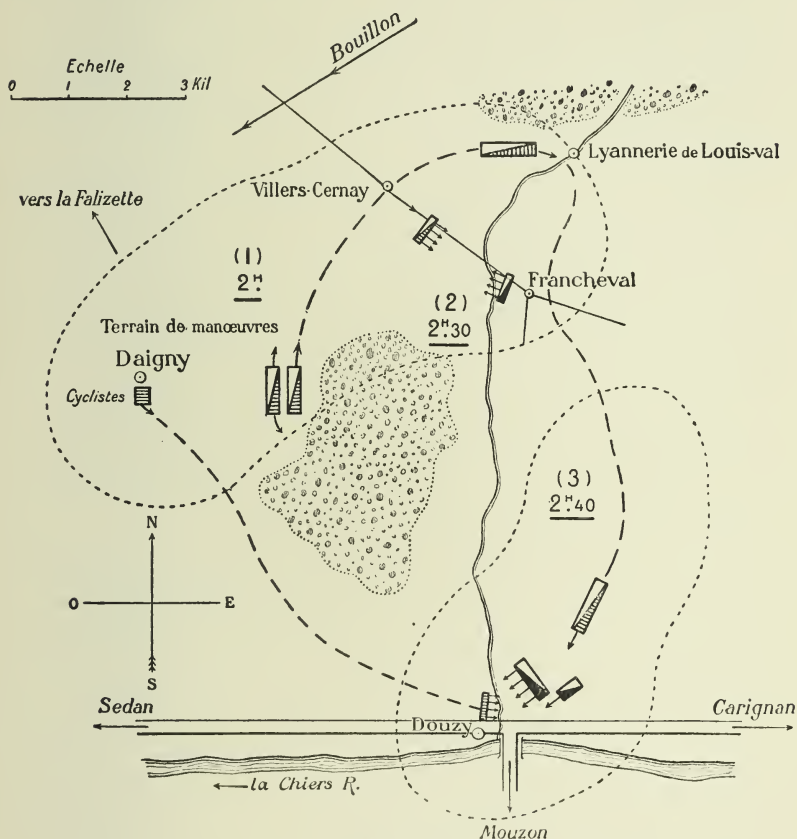
### *Summary of Report.*

*Scheme for a Half Regiment.*—The utility of fighting to promote the success of a particular enterprise.

*Execution* (2 p.m.).—My half regiment is assembled at the western boundary of the Chevalier wood, facing south.—Patrols have been sent out towards Villers-Cernay, Rubécourt, etc.

*First Incident* (2 p.m.).—While I am still reading my orders, I receive information that two hostile squadrons are marching through Villers-Cernay, and moving south.—I give the following orders: (1) To Lieut. X: "Ride with your troop to Daigny, pick up the section of cyclists you will find there, then make for Douzy, and hold the bridge.—I am going to engage the enemy.—Do your best to keep them away from Douzy."—(2) To the main body: "It is my intention to engage the enemy;—direction, Villers-Cernay, Francheval."—

*Second Incident (2.20 p.m.).*—I have passed by Villers-Cernay and escaped discovery.—Information received from a patrol in contact: “The



MAP 36.

enemy's main body has passed through Francheval.—Both bridges over the Magne at Francheval are barricaded.—Each of them is held by about twenty men, dismounted.”

I decide to make a determined frontal attack, while two of my troops turn the enemy by La Lyanerie de Louis-Val.—I therefore give the order to Captain C:—"Take two troops; move by the left, and sweep round by the left bank on Francheval."—To the first squadron:—"Dismounted action.—The two right troops. Objective: The first bridge.—The two left troops, the second bridge."—To the second squadron (two troops): "In reserve; remain mounted."

2.35.—The passage of the river is free.—I take up a position with my two squadrons on the left bank of the river, east of Francheval.

*Third Incident* (2.40 p.m.).—As I reach the uplands, the enemy's half regiment returns hastily to Francheval.—I charge, reaping the advantage both of the ground and of the surprise.

I hear firing in the direction of Douzy, whither the enemy has retired.—I gallop in that direction, and charge the hostile squadrons who are engaged with the cyclists.—MAJOR T.

*Criticism.*—There was one solution which at first sight might possibly have appealed to you—*i.e.*, to have gone to Douzy with the whole of your force, taken up a position there, and awaited developments. This plan, however, would have not only left all the approaches open, but have exposed you to every subsequent peril,—your mission would have suffered accordingly.—I fully endorse your own solution.—The fact of engaging the enemy (Third



Incident) kept him away from Douzy.—You attacked the enemy from the rear; it was the soundest plan, and you derived the full benefit from it.—THE DIRECTOR.

If you avoid an engagement when dealing with an enemy taught to seek an encounter you will find yourself in a very awkward position.—Whatever may be your own task at the time, your immediate adversary inevitably will be the hostile cavalry. Whether you desire it or not, a collision is unavoidable.—It behoves us, therefore, to be thoroughly prepared for it.—Once thoroughly master of the principle of the offensive, without any thought of abandoning, we shall have learnt how to seize the initiative in war both in attack and manœuvre.—THE COLONEL.

### No. 3.

*Scheme for Half Regiment.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part.*—All the Officers.

*Rendezvous* (April 15, 6 a.m.).—Saint-Pierremont. On the way home after a garrison field-day.

### PROBLEM C.

*General Idea.*—After a successful engagement fought on April 12 in the district of Beaumont, a detachment is marching on the 15th via Mouzon to Carignan.—A mixed brigade, detached at Saint-Pierremont, has been ordered to cross the Meuse

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at Remilly, and then move round on Carignan, where it is to rejoin the main body.

Bodies of the enemy's troops (all arms) have fallen back north of the Chiers.

*Special Idea.*—At 6 a.m. the brigade is at Saint-Pierremont. — Order to the O.C. cavalry (two squadrons, a machine-gun section, and a cyclist company): “The brigade will march via Raucourt to Remilly, where it will cross the Meuse about 11 a.m.; it will then move on to Carignan.—It will (1) occupy the bridge at Remilly as speedily as possible.—(2) Hold the passages over the Chiers as far as, and including, Brévilley.—Hostile detachments of all arms are reported north of the Chiers in the vicinity of Francheval, Bazeilles, and Sedan.”—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Report.*

*Scheme for a Half Regiment.*—Cavalry, cyclists, and machine-guns.

*Execution.* — Holding the bridge at Remilly. The enemy can anticipate my arrival at Remilly by advancing either via Douzy or Sedan.—I cannot manœuvre the bridge by the right bank, as I have no means of crossing the river south of Remilly. I decide, therefore, to take it by a surprise, making such demonstrations as will be most likely to mislead the enemy as to my real line of advance.—I give orders therefore to the column to march to La Besace-Raucourt, where it will divide, one

half going on to Autrecourt and Petit-Remilly, the other towards Remilly.

Order to Lieut. Y (troop of scouts of the first squadron and a section of cyclists): "Move as swiftly as possible to the bridge at Remilly; hold it with the cyclist section, and send out patrols towards Sedan along the left bank of the river. Then reconnoitre towards Douzy and north of the Chiers.—I shall remain with the main body."

*Distant Protection.*—Sergeant X and four men: "Patrol ahead."

*Immediate Protection.*—The first squadron will supply the protective troops ahead; the second squadron those in rear.—Two troops and a section of cyclists in advanced guard.\*

Order of march: First squadron, second squadron, machine-gun section,† cyclist company.—There is

\* 'Cyclists riding their machines along a road are defenceless. A company, moreover, forms a column some 220 yards long, and is often difficult to handle in case of a sudden attack. Advanced guards are frequently engaged.—It may be hazardous, therefore, to push them forward, although their support would often prove extremely useful.—This being so, cyclists should generally march between the advanced guard and the main body.—They will not have to pedal far to be at their fighting post. The cavalry will protect them, and they will add to its strength.'—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

† "Machine-guns will take a useful and considerably varied part with an advanced guard, provided they are as mobile as they should be.—Their peculiar equipment allows them to move almost as quickly as cavalry, and permits of their being pushed far to the front without danger.—It will be possible, therefore, as they offer a less vulnerable target than a battery of

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a thick fog.—We move off at 6 a.m.—At the northern exit from the Dieulet woods the advanced guard moves on ahead towards La Bagnole.

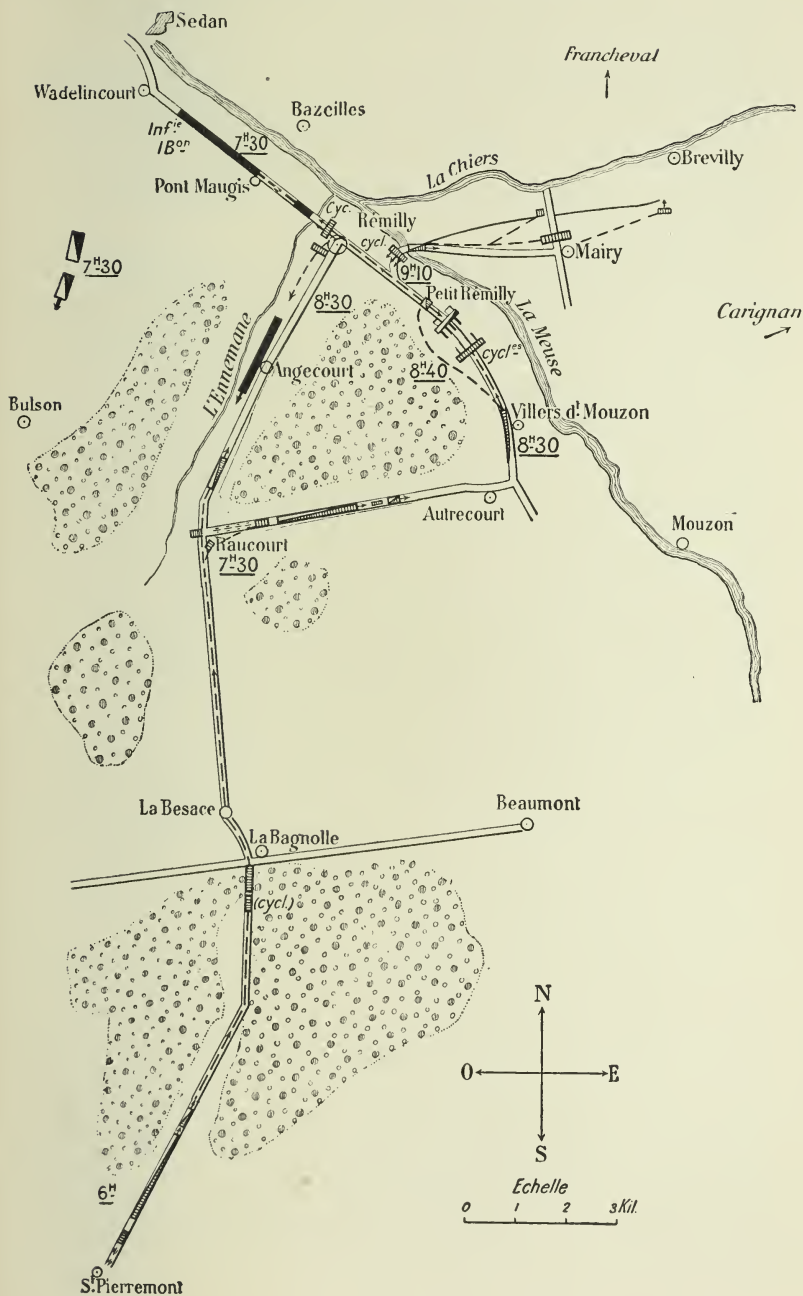
*First Incident* (7.30 a.m.).—I reach Raucourt. Information received :—“ Two squadrons of the enemy from Sedan have moved forward towards Bulson.—A hostile squadron <sup>at Remilly</sup> has charged the cyclist section as it entered the village and put it out of action. A battalion of the enemy's infantry, marching from Wadelincourt, has just passed through Pont-Maugis.”

I intend to give the enemy reason to suppose that I am marching on Remilly by Angecourt. I shall go therefore, concealed by the fog, to Autrecourt, and thence to the bridge via Petit-Remilly. Order to the two troops in advanced guard : “ March upon Remilly down the Ennemane valley.”—Order to the first squadron : “ One troop and a section of cyclists in advanced guard.—Direction—Autrecourt.”—I march with the advanced guard.

8.15 a.m.—I arrive at Autrecourt.—Order to the rear-guard (one section) :—“ Take up a position at the Raucourt-Autrecourt cross-roads so as to protect us in rear against any hostile cavalry movement from that direction.”—I trot on towards Petit-Remilly.

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artillery, to employ them more frequently and for longer periods than has hitherto been customary. They may be allowed, without risk, to march in rear of the first two squadrons, or even in rear of the first.”—CAPITAINE LOIR : *Cavalerie*.



MAP 37.

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*Second Incident* (8.30 a.m.).—I am at Villers before Mouzon, where I receive the information: “A battalion of hostile infantry has just passed through Remilly, and is marching in the direction of Angecourt.”

I decide to take immediate possession of Remilly, to leave the cyclists in charge of the village, and then make a dash in pursuit of the enemy.—I give the order to gallop.

*Third Incident* (8.40 a.m.).—I am about three-eighths of a mile from Petit-Remilly.—I hear firing.—Information from the advanced guard: “A troop of the enemy’s cavalry, dismounted, is fighting at the southern extremity of the village.”—Order to the cyclist section: “Frontal attack.—Objective: the enemy; fire!”—Order to the troop in advanced guard: “Attack the enemy’s right flank.”

*Fourth Incident* (9 a.m.).—I am about 100 yards from the bridge at Remilly.—I receive the information: “The road is open across the bridge.—A section of hostile infantry from Angecourt is just marching into the village.”

As the fog is favourable to a charge,\* I give the

\* “Stewart led the brigade up the hill (at Albuera) without delay in column of companies, and attempted to open out his line in succession as the battalions arrived at the summit. A heavy rain prevented any object from being distinctly seen, and four regiments of Hussars and Lancers, which had passed the right flank in the obscurity, came galloping in upon the rear of the line at the instant of its development, and slew or took two-thirds of the brigade.—One battalion only (the 31st),



order to the first squadron (two troops):—"Gallop through the village; then down the Angecourt road, and charge straight ahead."

I am master of Remilly.—Order to the first squadron (two troops):—"Go quickly to Mairy, and defend the bridges over the Chiers from the rear."—I intend to take further advantage of the fog to attack the hostile infantry with my machine-guns in the Angecourt defile.—I shall make the cyclist section my rallying-point.

Order to the cyclist company:—"Hold (1) the bridge; (2) the southern approach to the village from the Angecourt road; (3) the northern approach from the Pont-Maugis road."—Order to the squadrons and machine-gun section:—"Direction—Angecourt."—(End of scheme.)—MAJOR X.

*Criticism.*—You had two duties to perform: (1) To seize the Remilly bridge and hold it till the arrival of your infantry.—(2) To hold the passages over the Chiers.—You lost sight of neither of your objectives.—You could only trust to chance to capture Remilly, and it must be confessed your success was partly due to luck.—It was impossible to prophesy what would actually occur. In war much must depend upon chance, and occasionally there is nothing else to be done but to rely

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being still in column, escaped the storm and maintained its ground, while the French horsemen, riding violently over everything else, penetrated to all parts."—NAPIER: *History of the War in the Peninsula*.

upon it.—You came to a decision, and carried out your plan quickly.—Promptitude is most essential for cavalry.—This is proved up to the hilt in the last scheme.

With regard to the cyclists, it might have been a matter of urgency to occupy Remilly at once. You sent your cyclists there with an escort of scouts.—This, I think, was justifiable.—But the cyclists, separated doubtless from their mounted escort, allowed themselves to be captured by the hostile cavalry.—This incident, however, does not necessarily condemn the duty you assigned them. It was their business to look after themselves, and we know, as a general rule, they manage to do so very effectively.—I think your method of distributing them throughout the column was judicious. The section with the advanced guard enabled you to clear your passage at Petit-Remilly.—Finally, the cyclist company proved extremely useful in guarding Remilly, where it formed a rallying-point while you set off on your expedition with the machine-guns.

As regards the machine-guns, you took the Angecourt road,—why not have moved along the heights west of the Ennemane?—THE DIRECTOR.

It would be absurd to pretend that there is no such thing as luck, and chance does play a very considerable part in war.—I should be the last person to blame a leader merely because he happens to be lucky.—For myself I am convinced

that if a leader will only move swiftly and resolutely upon his objective, fortune is bound to favour his enterprise.

As regards the machine-guns, I think Major X was doubly justified in following the road instead of marching along the higher ground,—not merely because of the fog, which lifted suddenly a few minutes later, but because of his objectives ; (1) Infantry in column on a road is a splendid target for machine-guns, owing to their restricted lateral range;—(2) The question of safety.—On the heights they would have been at the mercy of hostile cavalry, and Major X was already aware there were two hostile squadrons in the neighbourhood of Bulson.—THE COLONEL.

#### No. 4.

*Scheme for Half Regiment.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part.*—The Squadron Leaders and Captains.

*Rendezvous* (May 18, 6.30 a.m.).—Balaives.

#### PROBLEM D.

*General Idea.*—On the morning of the 18th a mixed brigade is marching from Raillicourt by Balaives to the uplands east of Boutancourt, where it will take up a position to cover the intended deployment of the army corps.—The

## 216 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

enemy (an army corps) coming from Bouillon was billeted in the neighbourhood of the Givonne on the evening of the 17th.—A large force of the enemy's cavalry is near Raucourt.

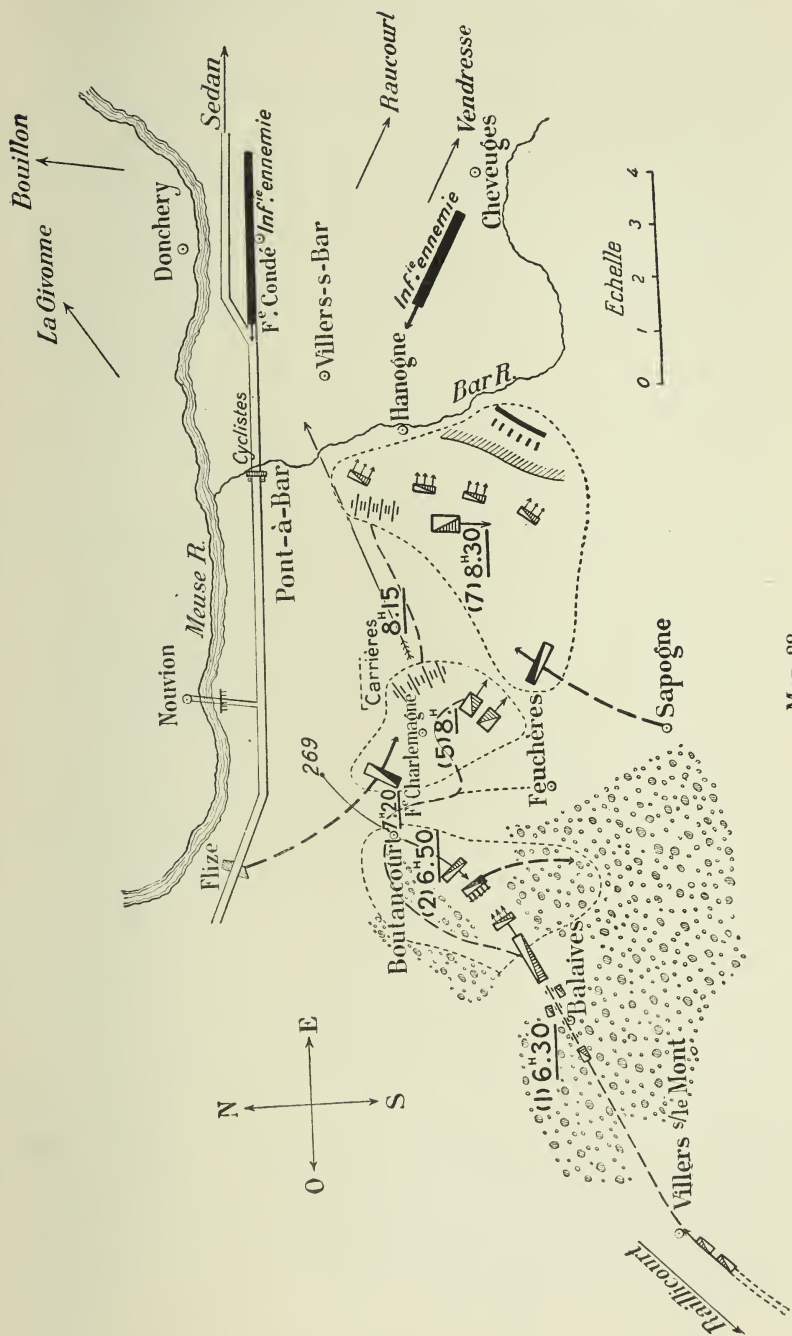
*Special Idea* (May 18, 5 a.m.).—The Mixed Brigade is at Raillicourt.

Order to Major M (two squadrons, two troops, and a battery of horse artillery):—"The brigade, marching via Balaives, expects to debouch on to the plateau east of Boutancourt and will form up on the line Feuchères—Boutancourt about 8.30 a.m. Move by the Balain uplands to the east of Boutancourt, and make the necessary dispositions to safeguard the arrival and assembly of the brigade.—The enemy's infantry has not crossed the Givonne, but cavalry have been seen in the vicinity of Chémery and Vendresse."

Reconnaissances have been already found.—The Bar and the bridge at Novvion are being watched by the corps cavalry.\*—THE DIRECTOR.

\* In the French Army a certain proportion of cavalry is allotted to each army corps.—Formerly a brigade was detailed to perform this duty.—It has been recently decided to allow a single regiment to replace the larger force.—Corresponding duties are performed by our mounted brigades (yeomanry with a stiffening of regular troops).—TRANSLATOR.

At present much too large a proportion of the available cavalry is allotted to the army corps at the expense of the cavalry divisions. Germany, with 102 regiments, allots 66 to cavalry divisions and 36 to army corps; while France, with 89 regiments, allots 53 to the latter and only 36 to the former.—The reason for this is that German officers, having



MAP 38.

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*Scheme for Half Regiment.*—Major M : Cavalry with artillery.

*Execution.*—Order given at Raillicourt, 5 a.m. : “The half regiment, with a battery, will march, via Balaives, to the uplands of Charlemagne, where the guns will take up a position of readiness in the direction of Sedan.—Route, Villers-sur-le-Mant—Balaives.—Order of march : First, the second squadron—followed by the artillery.—One troop in rear-guard.—Order to Lieut. X, with two troops :

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ever before their eyes the strong offensive, allot the greatest number of their cavalry regiments to that part of their forces which will be entrusted with a truly offensive rôle. France, on the other hand, when the present organization was adopted, was feeling the effects of the war of 1870, and remembering how she had suffered from the offensive of her opponents, was thinking more of defence than offence.—The importance of an adequate force of cavalry for purposes of reconnaissance, and of securing domination of the ground between the opposing armies before they come in contact, cannot be over-emphasized.—The demoralizing effect of allowing the enemy a free hand in that area is apparent ; but how can this be prevented if, instead of using the available cavalry to counteract that of the enemy, the bulk of it is absorbed in a passively defensive rôle ?—It is now proposed that France should have ten organized cavalry divisions, each of three brigades of two regiments, and that each army corps stationed in France should have allotted to it one regiment of light cavalry of a mobilized strength of six squadrons.—By this organization France would be able to oppose the German cavalry with very nearly an equal number of squadrons.—That the excessive number of regiments attached to the army corps at present is not needed is shown by the fact that at all recent manœuvres improvised cavalry divisions are formed from them without any proper staff.—*Journal United States Cavalry Association*, 1913.



“Go quickly to the exits from the woods at Balaives ; take up a position there to safeguard the half regiment as it moves out of the defile.”—Order to Lieut. V and six men : “ Patrol the Charlemagne plateau—(1) Towards Point 269 ;—(2) Towards Hannogne.—Select a position for the guns facing Sedan and Donchéry.”—I march myself with the main body.—

*First Incident* (6.30 a.m.).—I am just moving out of Balaives.—Information from Lieut. X : “ With the exception of a few hostile cavalry patrols nothing is reported either on the plateau east of Boutancourt or in its immediate vicinity.” Order :—“ Route : Boutancourt—the footpath to Feuchères—Charlemagne Farm—the quarries.—Sergeant X and four men : Patrol ahead, one troop in advanced guard.”—I march with the advanced guard.

*Second Incident* (6.50 a.m.).—The column is engaged in the defile.—The advanced guard is about 1,100 yards (five furlongs) to the south of Boutancourt, when it is fired upon from the outskirts of the village.

Order to the advanced guard :—“ Dismounted action.—Objective—the enemy.”—To the Captain commanding the first squadron (three troops) : “ Move away to the left towards Etrépigny, and sweep round upon Boutancourt.”

7.10 a.m.—The enemy (one squadron) makes <sup>his</sup> escape towards Sapogne.—Order : “ 2nd Squadron (one section) Maintain contact.”

*Third Incident* (7.20 a.m.).—I move out of Boutancourt.—A company of cyclists, which has followed me up, has left one half company at Balaives.—The second half company is placed at my disposal.—Order: “One section to remain at Boutancourt in support; one section to Pont-à-Bar, where it will join the corps cavalry and assist to hold the bridges.”

Lieut. V, who has been sent out on patrol, rejoins.—He will conduct me to the artillery position he has “reconnoitred.”—I move on with the advanced guard towards Feuchères, and afterwards to the Quarries.

*Fourth Incident* (7.35 a.m.).—The guns unlimber facing Charlemagne Farm.—They are protected in front and on the right flank by a wire fence. The first squadron is responsible for the protection in front and right;—the second for that to the rear and left.—The half regiment is close to the Farm, facing Feuchères and Hanogne.—I am with the battery.—We are able to distinguish small bodies of hostile infantry. At 7.50 a.m. we can make out a compact column on the old road from Donchery to Pont-à-Bar.—Order to the O.C. artillery: “Open fire.”—Order by the O.C. of the battery: “At 3,000 yards, etc.”—

*Fifth Incident* (8 a.m.).—A hostile squadron, which has come up through Flize, charges the battery on its flank.—The officer in command of the half regiment moves the two squadrons clear of the wire

fence, and gives the order to No. 1 Squadron to charge.—The battery is rescued.

*Sixth Incident* (8.15 a.m.).—There is nothing visible either on the Donchery road or in the valley. Heavy columns of hostile infantry are marching from Cheveuges to Hanogne.—The head of a brigade appears towards Boutancourt.—Order to the artillery: “Limber up; move to a fresh position on the edge of the plateau facing Hanogne. Gallop!”—To the second squadron: “Escort to the guns.”—To the six troops remaining: “Cover the guns while they unlimber.—Form an extended firing line fronting the Hanogne uplands, and the roads from Sapogne.”—I follow the guns.

*Seventh Incident* (8.30 a.m.).—The guns unlimber at the north-east boundary of the plateau facing Hanogne. They also command the ground in the direction of Villers-sur-Bar.

The hostile infantry posts have taken up a position on the heights west of Hanogne, and are firing at the artillery and its escort at a range of 850 yards.—A hostile squadron appears moving out of Sapogne.—The second squadron starts off to intercept it. (End of scheme.)—MAJOR M.

*Criticism.*—The main object you had in view was to reach the uplands to the east of Boutancourt with the least possible delay.—On arrival you were to choose a position for your guns so that they could command the Meuse Valley in the direction whence the enemy might be expected to

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advance—*i.e.*, from Sedan and Donchery.—This was in accordance with your orders, and you did not allow any of the different incidents to tempt you to swerve from your task.—You were quite right.—Your orders were clearly defined and your dispositions well chosen.—I remarked a few minor errors — (Incidents 2 and 5). — It would have been preferable to have taken the lane leading from Boutancourt to point 269. It is not only shorter, but being less exposed it would have afforded better cover.—I should have unlimbered at point 269; you would have commanded the same ground you did from the position chosen and you would have had a better line of retreat.—You would have been protected by the wire fence, and the escort at Charlemagne Farm, with the Cyclist Section at Flize, would have given you greater protection.—There is one question of paramount importance still to be solved.—Although cavalry co-operating with horse artillery armed with the latest quick-firing gun is rightly regarded as one of the most potent factors in modern warfare,\* actions similar to this—no matter how swift

\* “According to the doctrine current in all European cavalries, with the exception of the British, the Russian cavalry, dominating the field, provided with mounted artillery, armed with carbines and free to move as it pleased, had every facility for cutting lines of communication, capturing convoys, keeping in constant contact with the enemy, and harassing columns on the march, as well as for playing a leading part in actual battle. Its real im-

and determined—must always run the danger of being neutralized, even if the guns are not captured, by a spirited offensive onslaught from hostile cavalry.\*

At 8.15, as your infantry was coming up, you were able to cross the plateau without risk.—Your men extended in a prolonged line, which may possibly have led the enemy to suppose they were infantry in position.—In the present case your solution was quite right.—THE DIRECTOR.

Incident 2: You meet a hostile squadron which,

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potence was a matter for amazement. But it was foredoomed to failure, and for two reasons: Firstly, on account of its defective training in marksmanship; and secondly, because its artillery was powerless against villages and field entrenchments.”—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.

\* “General Ladmira<sup>n</sup>lt, commanding the 4th French Corps, felt it had become necessary to clear the flats of Ville-sur-Yrou<sup>n</sup>; he gave the orders that this should be done, therefore, to General du Barail, commanding the 2nd Regiment of Chasseurs d’Afrique, and to General Legrand, whose whole division had been assembled. The instructions were sent to the Clerembault Cavalry Division; the orders, however, were given to each General separately. As the force had not been placed temporarily under one supreme command, the Generals, acting independently, attacked separately. The 2nd Regiment of Chasseurs d’Afrique at once charged the Von Planitz Battery and its escort of one squadron. The battery was able to limber up, but was nevertheless overtaken by the French cavalry. The German artillery and horse with the French chasseurs thus galloped in wild confusion towards Mars-la-Tour.—The chasseurs, however, being unsupported, were obliged to abandon their quarry when they became aware of a German dragoon regiment galloping to the rescue.”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*, “Battle of Rezonville.”

being threatened by your somewhat belated turning movement, retires towards Sapogne.—You sent a section in pursuit.—This was insufficient.—You should have given orders for it to be supported by two troops at least, which, when they came up, could have easily and effectively paralyzed it.—It never answers to allow the enemy's cavalry to act just as it pleases.

As regards the Seventh Incident.—The guns were within range of the hostile infantry.—In such cases cavalry escorts are useless, and you wisely adopted a formation which gave your command the appearance of infantry.—Your position, however, was not without danger when it is remembered that you were actually under infantry fire from the direction of Hanogne.—An ideal escort in the circumstances would have been a machine-gun section.\*—THE COLONEL.

Apparently you rather usurped the duties of the gunner officer.—You “reconnoitred” his position for him† and gave the actual orders to open and

\* “It may be desirable occasionally to employ machine-guns with an escort to horse artillery. But as it will often be impossible, in such circumstances, to direct their fire against the enemy's main body, and, moreover, as machine-gun fire will seldom stop a determined mounted attack in extended order, this method of employment will not be regarded as normal.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 303.

† “On the day of battle many Generals busy themselves in regulating the march of the troops in their command, in hurrying A.D.C's to and fro, and in galloping incessantly in all directions. In their anxiety they desire to do everything



cease fire.—I admit you were responsible—but so was the officer commanding the guns.—There must be absolute harmony between you both.—The gunner knows far better than you what his position should be.—Having regard to the efficacy of his fire, he should have reconnoitred the ground himself. Explain your plan fully to him, of course; but your chief care should be to think only how best to protect the battery with your squadrons.—THE BRIGADIER.

No. 5.

*Scheme for Half Regiment.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part.*—All the Officers.

*Rendezvous* (June 5).—Daigny-la-Moncelle training-ground, after a field day.

PROBLEM E.

*General Idea.*—A mixed brigade from Sedan is marching down the main road from Bazeilles to Douzy to intercept a hostile infantry brigade marching upon Sedan, and reported to be in the neighbourhood of Messincourt.

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themselves. As a result they do nothing.”—MARÉCHAL DE SAXE: *Mes Réveries*, 1757.

“To our sorrow, we know how the Commander-in-Chief” (Bazaine, at the Battle of Rezonville) “was occupied. Transformed into a Captain of artillery, he occupied himself in placing a battery in position, leaving whole divisions and the army corps themselves without orders!”—CAPITAINE LOIR: *Cavalerie*.

*Special Idea* (8 a.m.).—The half regiment attached to the mixed brigade is at La Moncelle.—A section of machine-guns has been placed at its disposal. The following order is received: “A brigade of the enemy’s infantry is reported in the vicinity of Messincourt.”—I intend to march along the main road to Douzy to meet it.—Orders: (1) Ascertain the enemy’s movements; (2) Manœuvre so as to cover my left.—I shall march with the advanced guard.—The brigade ‘operation orders’ are attached.”—(Signed) GENERAL L.—THE DIRECTOR.

*Scheme for Half Regiment.*—Seizing and holding a position.

*Execution* (8 a.m.).—I am at La Moncelle.—I intend to make ample provision for the various reconnaissances.—In the first place I shall make it possible for them to push forward east of the Francheval brook, which is held, I presume, by hostile cavalry posts.—I therefore give the following orders—To the scouts of the first squadron: “Direction—Rubécourt-<sup>18</sup>~~n~~-Ferronerie.—On arrival send out patrols towards Sachy-Messincourt.”—(2) To the scouts of the second squadron: “Direction—Villers-Cernay—Francheval.—On arrival send out patrols towards Messincourt-Escombres.—Reports for the brigadier to be forwarded to the Carignan-Sedan road; those to the O.C. cavalry towards Pouru-aux-Bois—Francheval.”

I seize the passage over the Francheval brook; I intend to draw the enemy’s attention towards

Rubécourt, then, under cover of the Chevalier woods, make for Francheval, which I intend to capture by a sudden attack.—Having captured the passage of the stream, I shall follow the left bank in the direction of Douzy.—Orders : “ Direction — Rubécourt. Order of march — first squadron, second squadron, machine-gun section. —One troop in rear-guard. Immediate protection : first squadron, in front, to the right and left ; second squadron in rear, to the right and left.—One troop in advanced guard.”

8.10 a.m. — I am on the crest line, facing Lamécourt.—Order to the troop in advanced guard : “ Direction—Rubécourt.—Push on as far as La Ferronerie.—Don’t be afraid to show yourself.—If you meet with resistance, fight dismounted.”—I then give the order to the main body to gallop towards Villers-Cernay.—Order to Sergeant Y and four men : “ Patrol ahead.”

8.30 a.m.—I am above Villers-Cernay.—Order to Captain C (Nos. 2 and 3 Troops) : “ Gallop to the Lyanerie de Louis-Val, then advance upon Francheval.

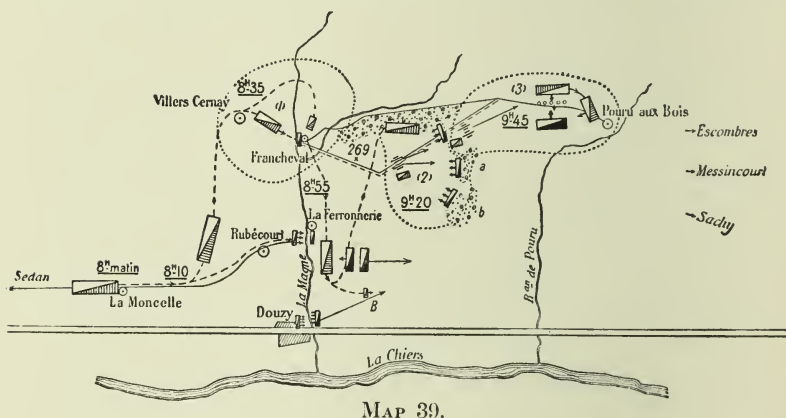
*First Incident* (8.35 a.m.).—I am at the eastern extremity of Villers-Cernay.—A hostile troop is fighting dismounted at Francheval.—Order to No. 4 Troop : “ Dismounted action.—Objective : Francheval.—Wait for my order to fire.”

8.45 a.m.—Captain C moves upon Francheval. Order to the second squadron : “ Nos. 3 and 4

## 228 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

Troops will follow the machine-guns, and remain with them.”\* I gallop with the remainder of the squadron towards the village.

8.55 a.m.—I have assembled the whole of my command, and am on the left bank of the Francheval brook on the bridge-path to Pouru.—I hear firing in the direction of Douzy. Order to Captain C: “Remain concealed with the machine-guns behind the furthestmost houses of the village.”



—We gallop south.—A hostile squadron has one of its troops fighting, dismounted, opposite the bridge at La Martinerie, fronting No. 1 Troop.—A second troop, also fighting dismounted, faces the scouts in front of the bridge at Douzy.—Two more troops, mounted, are close to point 233, facing Rubécourt. I gallop down the slope and charge.—Order to No. 2 Troop: “Pursue; I am going to Pouru-aux-

\* “Machine-guns will not, as a rule, require a special escort beyond the provision of a few scouts.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 309.

Bois.”—I assemble my half regiment north of the plateau west of Francheval.

The scouts have left one section behind to watch the brook at La ~~Martinerie~~ and Francheval.—Both detachments have gone on ahead to reconnoitre.—I make for Pouru-aux-Bois by the fringe of the woods along the heights to the north.

*Criticism.*—What an infantry brigade has a right beyond everything to expect from its cavalry is information.—The different reconnaissances must therefore be carried out at all costs.—You entrusted this duty to your two troops of scouts. They have been perfectly trained ; you are virtually certain your orders will be carried out.—When once you held the stream you might, in addition, have sent out those officers,\* whose presence with you was not an absolute necessity, on patrol.—You can never do too much in this way. Were such a consummation attainable, the ideal plan would be so completely to envelop the enemy that you could send continuous information of his every move to your Brigadier.†

\* “It will be impossible to use officers as leaders of all patrols ; generally speaking, they should be employed only to lead those of particular importance.”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 257.

† How was it that the Japanese, in spite of the numerical inferiority of their cavalry, used it to so much greater advantage ? From the very beginning of the campaign they employed officer-scouts, accompanied by a few mounted men, as search patrols. We have already seen that the protection of the army itself was secured by means of small mixed detachments, disposed chequer-wise, and marching with widely extended fronts.—DE NÉGRER.

## 230 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

You made for the main body, and intended to take part in the fight ;—I rely upon your doing so.—But in this case, having regard to the fact that your main duty was to procure information, this particular obligation was purely secondary.

As regards your manœuvre to capture the stream, a necessity alike for the further advance and subsequent return of your patrols, I am glad to note it was carried out in accordance with the true spirit of the mounted arm.—By remaining so quietly before Francheval you were able to effect a surprise. It may perhaps be argued, however, that you manœuvred the stream without knowing whether it was held by the enemy or not.—From the moment you felt it was necessary to hold it, you were perfectly right to manœuvre it straight away on the assumption, of course, that it was actually held.—This is what is known as “setting out to destroy the enemy without giving him time to think.”—THE DIRECTOR.

It is not the enemy, but the ground you should manœuvre.—THE COLONEL.

### PROBLEM E (*continued*).

*Special Idea* (9.5 a.m.).—The half regiment is assembled on the tableland south of Francheval (point 269), on the path to Pouru.—Captain C's two troops with the machine-guns have rejoined. Another is in contact with two of the enemy's



troops towards the south-east.—The half regiment will move against the enemy's main body by Pouru-aux-Bois and Escombres.

*Cavalry with machine-guns.*

*Execution.*—I am going to Pouru-aux-Bois, and move by the southern boundary of the woods fringing the uplands to the north.—The machine-guns follow along the path.—I shall act as circumstances demand.

*Second Incident (9.20 a.m.).*—The path to Pouru is held by a body of dismounted men at the southern boundary of the wood.—Shots are fired from clumps *a* and *b* south of the path.

I intend to force a passage with the machine-guns.—I give the order, therefore: "Action, front; objective: the path to Pouru."—The machine-guns open fire at a range of 900 yards.

9.35 a.m.—The incident is abortive.—The hostile cavalry has galloped off towards Pouru.—I leave the section of machine-guns at the northern end of the Pouru path.—It is concealed, and commands the valley.—Two troops with Captain C are left as escort.—I start off towards Pouru with five troops.

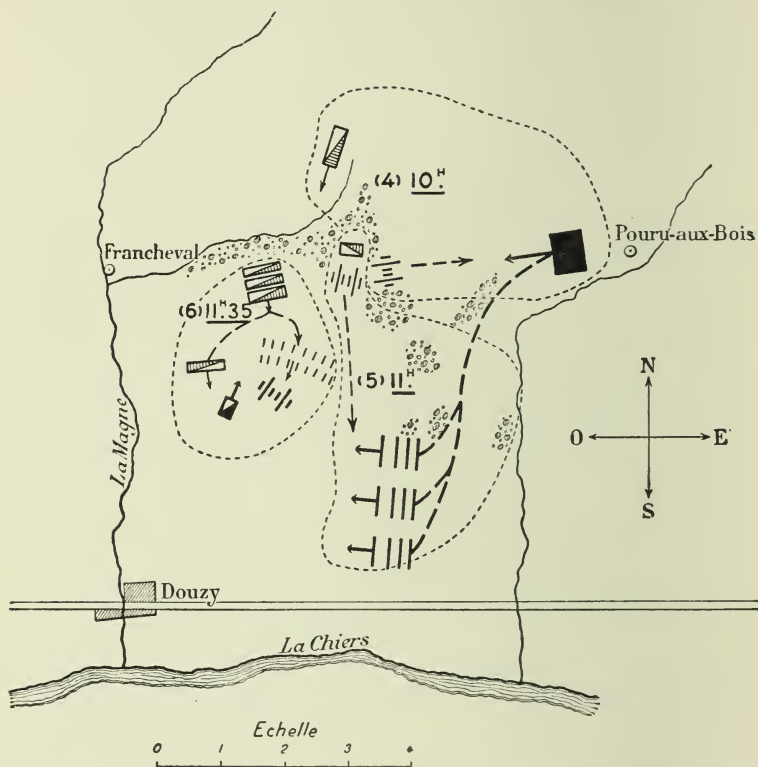
*Third Incident (9.45 a.m.).*—I am 850 yards west of Pouru in column of troops.—A hostile squadron appears about 650 yards to my right and deploys.

Order to the first troop: "Make off to the right in extended order."—I gallop straight on, then

## 232 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

wheel to the right, and charge the enemy at an oblique angle.

*Fourth Incident* (10 a.m.).—I am with the first squadron to the north of Pouru-aux-Bois.—



MAP 40.

Two of my troops are in pursuit towards the Francheval woods.—The enemy's infantry suddenly appear coming out of the village, marching upon Francheval.—I hastily conceal myself, and make for the north of the ravine.—My machine-guns open

fire at a range of 1,300 yards.\*—The hostile infantry inclines to its left towards the Pouru brook.—I have rejoined the machine-guns, and have the whole of my half regiment with me.

*Fifth Incident* (11 a.m.).—The hostile infantry, following the little brook upstream, has climbed up to the Francheval tableland.—I am in rear and to its right.—The machine-gun section, hidden from sight by the fringe of the wood, now faces west. I am also concealed slightly to the north, at the southern salient of the wood.—My brigade emerges from Douzy and La Ferronerie.—The fight begins.—The machine-guns open fire at a range of 1,100 yards at the rear of a compact column of infantry.

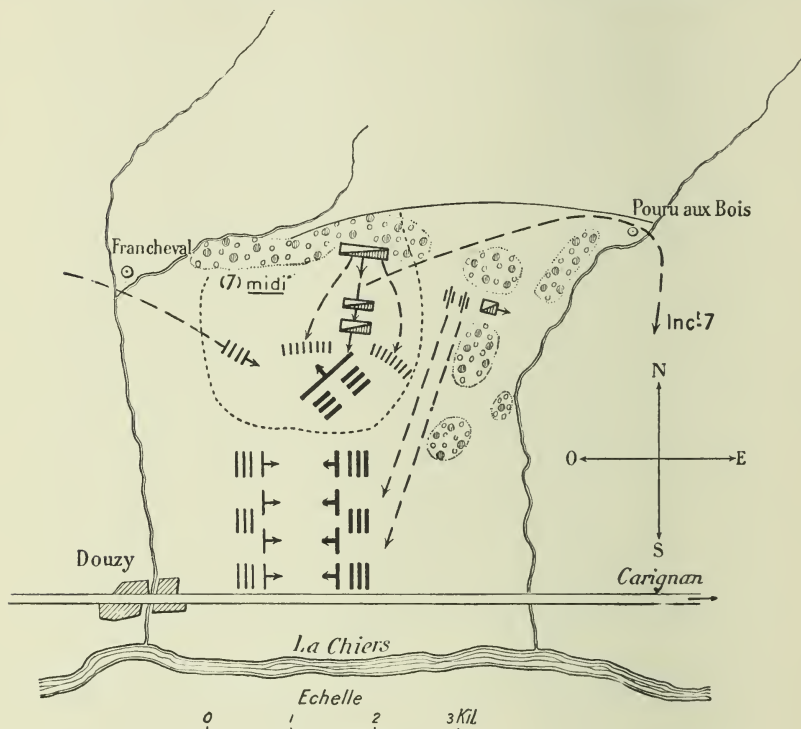
*Sixth Incident* (11.35 a.m.).—A section of artillery, which has unlimbered to the right of the enemy's infantry, opens fire at the machine-gun section. The guns are out of sight of their own infantry. Their mounted escort appears to be in rear and to the north.—I decide to charge the enemy's guns. Orders,—to the first two troops: "Attack the escort"; to the third and fourth troop:—"In extended order attack the guns."—The two remaining troops in reserve.—I support the two troops attacking the escort.

*Seventh Incident* (12 noon).—One battalion of my brigade is clear of Francheval, and now faces

\* "Fire should not be opened at ranges much beyond 1,200 yards unless a particularly favourable target offers, or a number of guns can be employed."—*Cavalry Training*, p. 312.

## 234 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

a portion of the enemy's line.—I am at the northern boundary of the woods fringing the plateau.—So far as my half regiment is concerned, the enemy holds an oblique position.—Its force is disposed in



MAP 41.

echelons several deep, the nearest about 650 yards distant.—I decide to charge.

I give the orders therefore—To No. 1 Troop: “Extend.—At the enemy’s left, Charge.”—To No. 2 Troop: “Extend.—At the enemy’s right, Charge.”—To the two last troops of the first

squadron: "Form line.—At the enemy's centre, Charge."—To the two first troops of the second squadron in support, with me, "Charge!"—

*Eighth Incident* (2 p.m.).—The enemy retreats westward.—I give the order to the half regiment and machine-gun section to gallop to Pouru-aux-Bois.—(End of scheme.)

*Criticism.*—This scheme demonstrates the increasing, if not decisive, influence of machine-guns in an engagement.—At no time did they impede or interfere with the action of the mounted arm.

*Second Incident* (and those following).—It was quite wise to leave the guns in a position of readiness at carefully concealed points, whence, in the first instance, they could command the valley of Pouru, and, in the second, the uplands of Francheval.—I gather that you appreciate the value of the offensive.—It is the one and only principle.

With regard to your mounted engagement, you attacked the hostile squadron with your men in extended order, and then manœuvred with your stronger detachment.—A capital idea.—Had you had only a single squadron at your disposal, however, it would not have worked so well.—In that case the best plan would have been to attack straight away; you would have still retained the advantage of the initiative.—It was owing to your maintenance of the initiative that your second troop was enabled to attack the enemy in rear at the moment

of the encounter.—This is a lesson worth remembering.

*Attack against Artillery.*—Here, again, there are two conflicting schools.—One maintaining that you should first go for the guns, and then for the escort ; the other, that you should attack the escort first, and the guns afterwards.—You believe in the latter ? So do I.—What was your objective ?—To capture the guns.—What prevented you ?—The escort.—Then let us devote our attention first to the escort, and manœuvre it, either in extended order or in line, while a detachment looks after the gunners and cuts them down.—The reserve should support whichever of the two attacking forces requires its assistance the more.

There is, of course, a third method—to attack the escort with the whole of your force.—The escort once disposed of, the guns would necessarily be captured (provided, of course, the gunners themselves have had no time to intervene).

*Attack against Infantry.*—You had a splendid opportunity.\*—You decided to charge the infantry which you came upon at an oblique angle.—What was your intention ?—To attack with well-closed-up lines ?—What was there to prevent you doing so ?

\* “ Because in modern warfare the long range and destructive fire of artillery necessitate scattered formations, opportunities will be more frequent for those brilliant dashes of small bodies of cavalry, in which, by taking advantage of the critical moment, they have so often distinguished themselves.”—MOLTKE: *Influence that Arms of Precision have on Modern Tactics.*



The hail of fire with which you would be met? This would have been dissipated by your attacks in extended order to the right and left, and within five seconds you would have been charging down the line you had previously selected.\*—To my mind, this was the right and proper thing to have done.—

THE DIRECTOR.

*Machine-Guns.*—You hoped to act by a surprise, and you concealed yourself in the woods to the west of the Pouru valley.—Your guns were in line, ten paces between each.—Remember this is the maximum interval. You had, of course, made out your range chart?†—You opened fire at 1,300 yards?—Don't forget that with the mark D ball ammunition you can fire up to 875 yards without altering the sight, and that from 875 to 1,300 yards any error in sighting is corrected by the flatness of the trajectory.

Why did you open fire upon the infantry as soon

\* "It is not those alone who know how to kill, but those who know best how to be killed, who save us at the critical moment."—DRAGAMIROF: *Manuel pour la Préparation des Troupes au Combat.*

† The distances of any remarkable objects ahead, as well as on the flanks, are accurately measured by the Japanese, especially those points of vantage where the enemy might be able to establish a line of fire. The entire landscape in front is quickly sketched upon boards previously marked out into squares. All the salient features are indicated, with instructions noted at the side, giving the number of the square, with the distance and the elevation to be employed in firing.—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War.*

## 238 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

as it came in sight?—You were not only well concealed, but in possession of extremely powerful means of destruction.—You should have allowed the infantry to advance.—You could then have fired upon the whole mass.—THE COLONEL.

### DEFENSIVE-OFFENSIVE MANŒUVRE \*

#### No. 6.

*Scheme for the Half Regiment.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part.*—The Field Officers and Captains.

*Rendezvous* (June 20, 4 p.m., after drill).—Daigny training-ground.

#### PROBLEM F.

*General Idea.*—A division of infantry left Carignan on the morning of June 20.—It is carrying out an offensive reconnaissance towards Mézières, where bodies of the enemy's forces are said to be concentrating.—It is marching via Messincourt—Villers - Cernay — Givonne — Saint Albert, etc. About 3 p.m. it halts for the night at Francheval and Villers-Cernay.—The march will be resumed on the morrow.—Patrols have been sent out.—A cavalry division is working in the same direction

\* "Transformation from the defensive to the offensive is one of the most delicate operations of war."—NAPOLÉON.

on the left bank of the Meuse, but is not expected to reach Sedan before nightfall.

*Special Idea.*—The regiment of dragoons attached to the infantry division is covering its advance, and is some distance ahead. On the 20th it is on the Givonne.—At 4 p.m. its reconnoitring detachments (first squadron) are on the Vrigne, where they will spend the night.—A troop of the third squadron is at Saint Albert.—The patrols sent out to the bridges at Sedan and Donchery have both been relieved by a troop from the cavalry division, and have rejoined.—The regiment is making its dispositions to spend the night.

Daigny training-ground, 4 p.m.—Verbal order : “Close billets, night of June 20-21.—Regimental headquarters and first half regiment—Illy ; second half regiment—Fleigneux.—Alarm post—Olly. Requisitions to be carried out locally.—Enemy : some 200 cavalry were seen at 2 p.m. to-day at Lumes (left bank) marching towards Donchery.”—  
THE COLONEL.

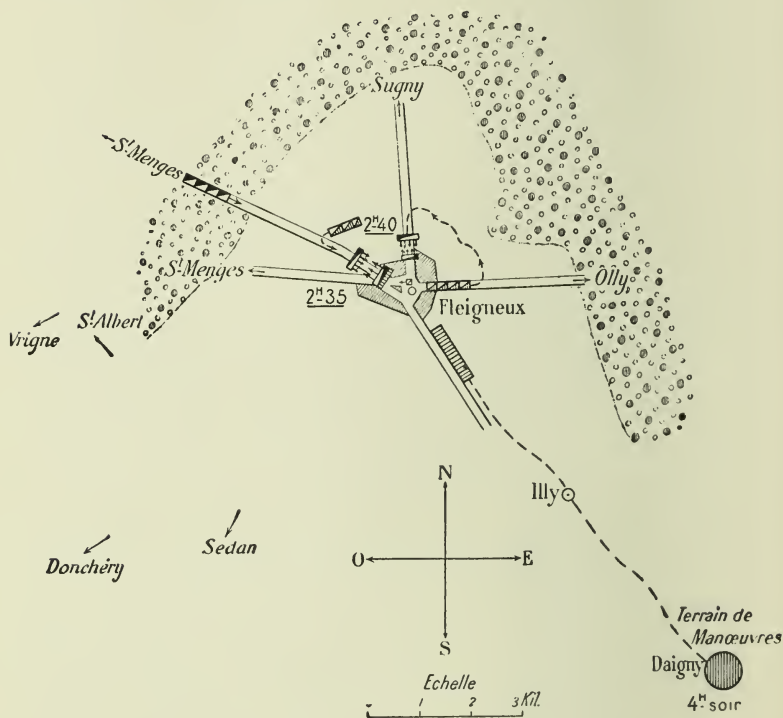
*Scheme for the Half Regiment.*—Major D : Second half regiment.—Billeting and night attack.

*Execution* (4 p.m.).—I am on the training-ground at Daigny with my half regiment.—Order to Lieut. X : “Take your troop and the billeting party and cover Fleigneux.”

5 p.m.—I am close to Fleigneux.—The billets are ready.—Order to the half regiment : “Protection of billets.—Distant protection.—The third

## 240 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

squadron will send a troop on to Saint Albert ; This troop will order out patrols in the direction of Donchery.—The first squadron has two detachments on the Vrigne. Immediate protection :—Barricades, and patrols out to the front.”



MAP 42.

5.20 p.m.—The half regiment has settled into its billets, and is protected by Lieut. X's troop which has established posts on the Saint Menges, Sugny, and Olly roads.—The third squadron is in the south-west quarter of the village, the fourth

squadron in the north-east.—There is an alarm-post on the Olly road, about a hundred yards north-east of Fleigneux.—A troop on piquet duty, found by the fourth squadron, remain close to the church.

One man detailed from each troop forms the main guard near it.—The officer commanding is billeted close at hand.

6 p.m.—The roads leading out of village are barricaded.—Lieut. Y's troop has come in.—The enemy is reported in the neighbourhood;—the horses therefore will remain saddled.—Silence is strictly enforced.

*First Incident* (2 a.m.).—Shots are heard from the direction of Vrine-aux-Bois; complete silence is maintained in the billet area.

*Second Incident* (2.15 a.m.).—A despatch rider gallops in from Saint Albert and reports that he has been pursued by two hostile squadrons.—The men are ordered dismounted to the barricades.—The piquet near the church falls in.

*Third Incident* (2.35 a.m.).—Firing has commenced.—The Saint Menges barricade is attacked.

*Fourth Incident* (2.50 a.m.).—Shots are fired at the barricade on the Sugny road.—I give the order to defend it.

*Fifth Incident* (3 a.m.).—I hear that the first half regiment which billeted at Illy is at Olly.—I give the order to hold the barricades till daybreak.

*Sixth Incident* (4 a.m.).—I give the order to mount.—The half regiment is opposed in every

direction by hostile cavalry and cyclists, and afterwards by a section of machine-guns.—(End of scheme.)—MAJOR D.

*Criticism.*—Your instructions concerning details were clear, and the transmission of orders adequately provided for.—In case of alarm, I presume your two Squadron Leaders would have joined you at once.—You were quite right to enforce silence ; it is indispensable at night, and your orders were strictly obeyed.—Your coolness was commendable, but the weak point in it all was that you remained in your billets, and thus found yourself cut off.—Read the Regulations.

There were three possible solutions to the incident created :

(1) You could have sent back word to the half regiment at Illy and waited for it to come to your rescue—a somewhat hazardous enterprise ;

then have  
mounted and  
made for Olly

Or (2) you could have sent word to the first half regiment ~~to mount and make for Olly.~~—This would have been all the more easy as your horses were saddled, although they certainly should not have been.

Or (3) having left two or three troops at the barricades, you might, with the remainder, mounted, have turned the village from the north. In that case you would have held the enemy, who were dismounted, at your mercy.—Cavalry attacking at night is not in a favourable position.—Unacquainted with the ground, it is impossible for it to



move with freedom.—It has to feel its way with the utmost caution, and is liable to be held up by barricades.—Consequently it is at the mercy of the enemy.—In this incident you should have decided to act on the offensive. Beyond everything promptitude was essential.—You must invariably practise the offensive.

You should reconnoitre by daylight.—It is often advisable to mark in some manner recognizable at night the line you intend to follow if attacked in the dark.—THE DIRECTOR.

You condemned yourself to be bottled up behind those eternal barricades.—Not only were your movements thus paralyzed, but you placed yourself at the mercy of any untoward event which might happen to turn up.—The final incident, sealing you in, was but the logical sequence of your having been located.—You should have saddled up at the first alarm, then if the attack was serious you could have cleared out.—Better still, when the first shots were fired, you might have left a few men at the barricades and turned the village with the remainder of your half regiment; you would have simply swept the dismounted men out of existence.—Apparently you were all half asleep.—What on earth was the troop on piquet duty doing?—It ought to have quietly opened the barricade on the Saint Menges road and charged straight ahead.—Afterwards it could have gone in search of the enemy's led horses.—THE COLONEL.

## 244 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

I think the half regiment, finding itself the object of a night attack, should have sent back word to the other half regiment and defended the billets till daybreak.—THE BRIGADIER.

The other half regiment should certainly have been informed ; but it is not at all certain it would have been able to come to the rescue.—Leaders must be taught to look after themselves.—They must learn to take the offensive even when defending billets.—In any case, this scheme is well worth discussion.—GENERAL X.

### REMARKS.

In the course of our training of cavalry units we have adopted as our guide, as far as possible, the principles of the Napoleonic manœuvre.—In this system the initial order is given out by the leader.—It is not, and never has been, a mere order of movement (this is reserved for the General Staff), but it is the notification for the execution of a plan—of an idea—of a carefully weighed resolve.—The plan once notified, reconnaissances are sent out with a view to obtaining the information required for the free execution of the most suitable manœuvre.

Thus it is that Napoleon remains the supreme master for the mounted arm.—No matter what the bonds with which our doctrine may be circumscribed, we are forced to free ourselves from them before taking action.—We shall then find ourselves, whether we like it or not, in the presence of a specific problem.—This we must solve on our own initiative, with our own resources and with our own personal ideas.—

The same principles of the Napoleonic manœuvre must still guide us in the future (it will then be said of us that we manœuvre with the cavalry spirit) in the leading of detachments of all arms.—They are in complete harmony with the conditions of numbers, time and space in which these detachments are called upon to manœuvre.—THE DIRECTOR.

## CHAPTER IV

### MIXED DETACHMENTS

#### OFFENSIVE MANŒUVRE

#### *Manœuvre of Lodi—1796.*

AFTER Cherasco, Beaulieu with the Austrian army had retired to the left bank of the Po in the direction of Turin.

Napoleon, who was near Alessandria, decided to manœuvre his opponent.—He therefore matured his plans to fix the enemy in his position by a demonstration fronting the river towards Turin, —while, with the manœuvring mass of his army, he made himself master of the passage of the Po by a surprise downstream so as to throw his main body across the Austrian line of retreat. With this end in view he issued the following orders—To General V (10,000 men):—"Make a demonstration towards the bridge at Valenzia;"—to the army of Italy:—"Direction: Stradella, the passage of the Po—Lodi."

Beaulieu, who got wind of the manœuvre and anticipated Napoleon at the passage of the Adda, was forced, nevertheless, to evacuate the whole of the fertile plains of Lombardy.

## No. 1.

*Scheme*.—For a mixed detachment.

*Director*.—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part*.—The Field Officers and Captains.

*Rendezvous* (February 2, 8 a.m.).—Givonne.

## PROBLEM P.

*General Idea*.—An infantry division from Carignan is marching by Sedan along the left bank of the Meuse to Mézières, where the enemy is reported to be concentrating.—The division which halted at Sedan on February 1 has sent out a mixed detachment on the right bank of the Givonne (Major L with two battalions, a section of horse artillery, a section of machine-guns, and two troops of cavalry).

*Special Idea* (February 2, 8 a.m.).—The mixed detachment (Major L) has concentrated at Givonne. He receives the following order—Sedan, February 2, 7 a.m.,—General X to Major L:—"The division is marching to Mézières by the left bank of the Meuse.—The enemy's covering detachment\* is

\* "If, as we must expect, cavalry has to reckon with an enemy which, whether halted or on the march, has enveloped itself with a practically impenetrable screen, it will be impossible for it to ascertain anything beyond the visible line formed by the screen itself at a given hour of the day. It will not be able to determine either the strength or the composition of the force behind the screen. Short of bringing other branches of the service into action, to expect more of the mounted arm is to ask impossibilities."—And further on: "The screens are formed of

reported in the vicinity of Lumes and on the Vrigne (right bank of the Meuse).—Move in these directions and push the detachment back towards Mézières.—A squadron of dragoons is at La Falizette; I have placed it at your disposal.—Connection between the detachment and the division is assured.”

### *Summary of Scheme.*

*Scheme.*—Dealing with a detachment of all arms.  
Major L.

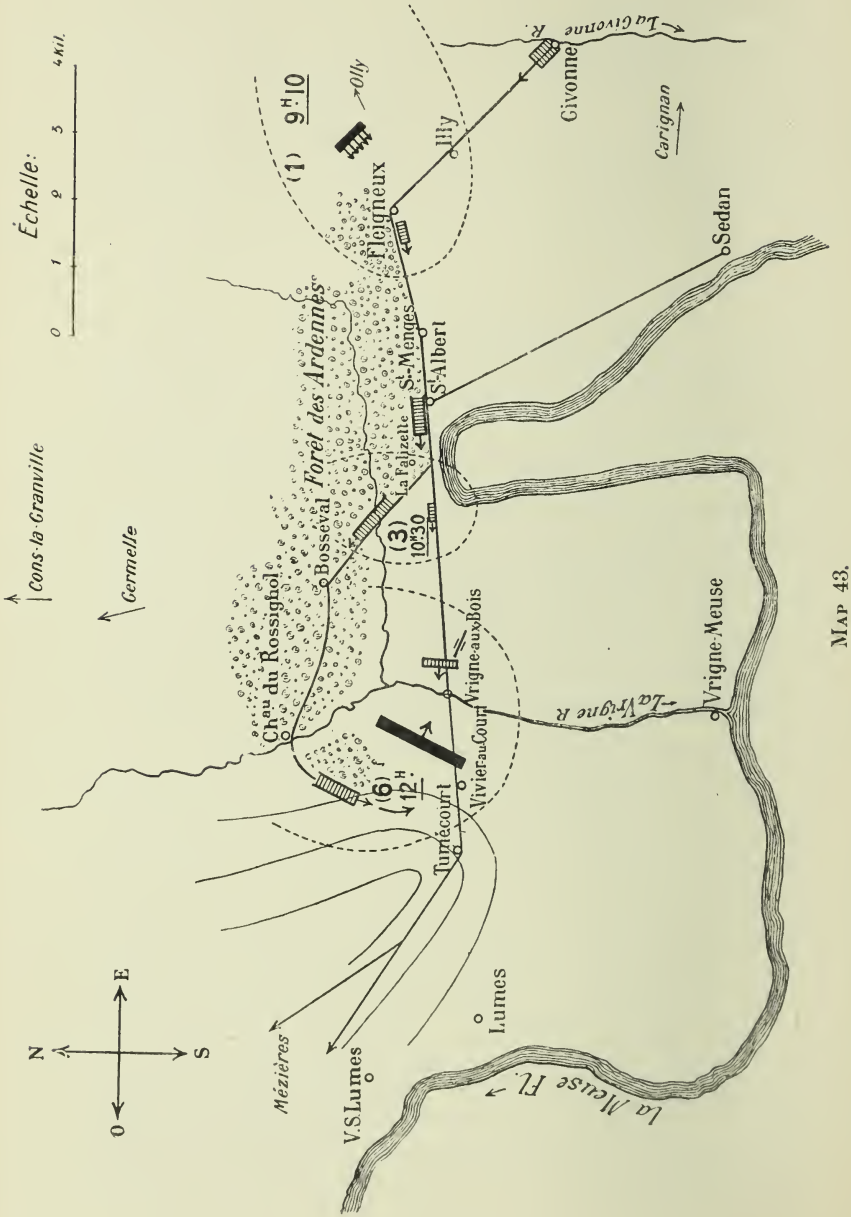
*Offensive Manœuvre.* — The employment of cavalry.

*Execution.*—It is my intention in the first instance to locate the enemy.—I shall march, therefore, by Saint Menges and La Falizette to the Vrigne.—I shall thus be moving in the right direction to obtain information, and shall act in accordance with the information I receive.

Order to the squadron at La Falizette: “Hold the defile at La Falizette till I come up.—Reconnoitre in the direction of (1) Vrigne—the Meuse—Lumes;—(2) Vrigne-aux-Bois—Vivier-au-Court, Ville-sur-Lumes; (3) Bosséval—Gernelle—Cons-la-Granville.”—I shall march myself with the infantry. The order of march herewith.

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fighting detachments, generally consisting of the feebler effectives, but comprising the three different arms in varying proportions according to the ground and the circumstances.”—DE NÉGRIER;  
*Russo-Japanese War,*





Order to the detachment: Route: Illy—Fleigneux—Saint Menges—Saint Albert—Vrigne-aux-Bois.

Advanced guard: One troop, one company, and the machine-gun section.

Order of march: First battalion—The sections of artillery—The second battalion.

Order to the cavalry:—"First troop, immediate protection forward.—Second troop, right flank guard, towards Bosséval."

8.10 a.m.—The detachment starts.—I am with the advanced guard.

*First Incident* (9.10).—I have just left Fleigneux when I hear shots behind me.—My column is being fired upon from the direction of Illy at a range of some 550 yards by a body of cavalry dismounted. A section of the second battalion repels the attack.

*Second Incident* (10 a.m.).—I am at the defile of La Falizette.—The patrols sent out to the Vrigne were unable to cross the river at Vrigne-aux-Bois. No information has come in.—I decide to continue my march towards Vrigne-aux-Bois.

Order to the squadron: "Push on towards Lumes and Mézières by Vrigne-sur-Meuse.—Information to be forwarded to the Vrigne-aux-Bois—Tumécourt road."—(The Director interrupts the scheme.)

*Criticism.*—You have two troops at your disposal for immediate protection.—You send one of them to Bosséval, and will never see it again.—The

whole of the other is in advanced guard.—You have nothing at all in rear, and nothing on either of the flanks.—You are fired upon without warning.—It was a moral certainty you would be.—With regard to the squadron placed at your disposal at La Falizette, you gave orders it was to hold the defile, and instructed it to send out patrols,—that was right enough ;—but you sent it out towards Mézières via Vrigne-sur-Meuse.—I confess I don't follow your motives.—Cavalry which is not engaged in carrying out protective duties is obviously at the disposal of a Leader for the furtherance of his plans in any manner he thinks most fit. What was your plan ?—I am under the impression you intended to push on straight ahead.—In time you would meet the enemy ; and I suppose, as a last resource, you would then begin to make your dispositions.—But these are all purely “defensive” tactics.—You are placing yourself at the mercy of your opponent.—You were waiting for information ?—But you were distinctly told the enemy was at Lumes and on the Vrigne.—What further intelligence could you expect ?—You must manœuvre the enemy.\*—You are here in exactly the right position to do so.—Consult your map.

What solution do I suggest myself ?—If I could only occupy the Tumécourt—Ville-sur-Lumes ridge, I should be master of the situation ;—the only

\* “The duty of an advanced guard is neither to advance nor to retreat, but to manœuvre.”—NAPOLEON.

real obstacle is the Vrigne. — I should order a vigorous demonstration at Vrigne-aux-Bois, and beyond. — I should then move myself with the main body as swiftly as possible to the right under cover of the woods, so as to sweep round upon Tumécourt.\* — My objective would therefore be Tumécourt.

Order to Major X, two companies (one of them the company in advanced guard); the artillery section, and one troop:—"Direction: Vrigne-aux-Bois—Tumécourt.—Attack the enemy wherever and whenever found.—Order to the main body (six companies and the machine-gun section): "Direction: Bosséval—Château du Rossignol—Tumécourt."—Order to the squadron: "Cover my movement towards Bosséval and Tumécourt."—THE DIRECTOR.

Major L reassumes the direction of the operations in accordance with the instructions given by the Director.

*Execution.*—The cavalry trots off to Bosséval. Order of march of the column: Advanced guard—two sections of cavalry, a company, the machine-gun section.—Main body:—a company of the first battalion, the second battalion. A section of cavalry in rear-guard.

\* "In the Russo-Japanese War the efficacy of enveloping movements has been continually confirmed wherever it has been possible to hold the enemy fixed in his positions by vigorous attacks persistently repeated."—DE NÉGRIER.

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*Third Incident* (10.30 a.m.).—I hear sharp and continuous firing in the direction of Bosséval, about three-quarters of a mile away.—I don't stop.—(A hostile troop was located in Bosséval, and put to flight by the squadron.)

*Fourth Incident* (10.40 a.m.).—I am near Bosséval.—I hear firing in the direction of Vrigne-aux-Bois ; five minutes later I hear the boom of guns.—I continue my forward movement.

*Fifth Incident* (11.10 a.m.).—I come out on the Vrigne at the Château du Rossignol.—My cavalry is on the tableland on the opposite side of the river at the boundary of the wood, half a mile south-east of Tumécourt.—In the distance, towards Vrigne-aux-Bois, I hear a violent cannon and musketry engagement.—I continue to advance.

*Sixth Incident* (12 noon).—I come out on to the plateau facing Vrigne-aux-Bois directly in rear of the enemy engaging Major X's detachment.—  
MAJOR L.

*Criticism.*—In this case the cavalry was responsible for a mission of paramount importance.—Your first duty was to avoid being seen.—Your cavalry having captured Bosséval moved on to the Vrigne and held the passage over the river there, thus intercepting the return of the enemy's despatch riders. It then galloped to the uplands and showed itself so as to attract the attention of the hostile cavalry—in a word, you manœuvred to avoid discovery. You might have opened fire on the enemy's rear

before you came up.—You were careful, however, not to do so, so as not to attract the attention of the hostile infantry.

You must learn with infantry to manœuvre as you have been taught with cavalry.—Make allowance for their slower movement, that is all. It is better to march a few extra miles to obtain a decisive success, than to try to overcome every small obstacle you meet at an excessive sacrifice.—THE DIRECTOR.

So long as it is regarded as exceptional, I quite approve of the method the Director put into practice upon this particular occasion.—If a solution appears to be unsound, it is his duty to criticize and explain what he thinks ought to have been done.—In this case he carried out his own solution, being careful to keep it within the bounds of the situation.—Clearly this is a more striking and more practical demonstration than the usual criticism at the end of a scheme; but it must be the exception and not the rule.—An officer under instruction must be allowed to act upon his own initiative.—THE COLONEL.

I endorse your plan of giving the only artillery you possessed to Major X, who was carrying out his movement parallel to your own.—It was evident that his feint ought to have every appearance of the main attack.\*—In this case it was essential to the

\* “You can’t inflict a greater injury upon an enemy than by concealing your intentions. It was for this reason, while com-

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success of your manœuvre.—Directly you found you had reached the enemy's rear, you should have opened fire with your machine-guns, and at once launched the attack.—I consider your machine-guns were well placed with the advanced guard.—  
THE BRIGADIER.

As regards the reconnaissances sent out by Major L, the Director has told us that the cavalry was entirely at the disposal of the Leader to assist him in the furtherance of his plans.—The Leader, therefore, should give out his own orders to the officers detailed for reconnaissance duty.—You should also explain your scheme to them.—They require the information, and you are yourself the most interested person in its success.—Major L, who had still retained two troops with him, was wrong to delegate this duty to the Squadron Leader detached at La Falizette.—GENERAL X.

### NO. 2.

*Scheme for a Detachment of all Arms.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part.*—The Field Officers and Captains.

*Rendezvous.*—Sedan, Place Nassau, March 20.

### PROBLEM Q.

*General Idea.*—A hostile force (A) has advanced from Montmédy to Carignan along the right bank

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manding the army in Spain, that Metellus, on being asked what he intended to do next day, replied: 'If I thought my tunic had an inkling of it I should immediately burn it.'"—MACHIAVELLI.



of the Chiers.—A force (B) has fallen back on Mézières.—It has left a detachment (Major D), consisting of an infantry regiment and three squadrons of dragoons, at Sedan to hold the bridges.

*Special Idea.*—(1 p.m.) Major D learns (1) that a detachment of the enemy from Montmédy has detrained at Pouru-Saint-Remy, and is carrying out requisitions in the vicinity of Douzy, Francheval, and Villers-Cernay. (2)—That a number of convoys have been concentrated at the station at Pouru-Saint-Remy.—Major D decides to leave two companies of the first battalion to safeguard the bridges, while, with the remainder of his detachment, he drives back the enemy.—THE DIRECTOR.

### *Summary of Scheme.*

*Scheme for a Detachment of all Arms.*—Major D: Offensive manœuvre.—Combat tactics.

*Execution* (1 p.m.).—The detachment is concentrated at the Place Nassau.—I have sufficient information to work upon.—I intend to make a frontal offensive movement on Douzy and Francheval so as to enable the cavalry to attack the station at Pouru-Saint-Remy from Villers-Cernay.

*Offensive Manœuvre.*—I intend to march ostensibly on Douzy-Rubécourt.—I shall afterwards make off to the west of the Chevalier woods, and so down upon Villers-Cernay, Francheval, and beyond.

The place to make for, therefore, is "point 269 on the plateau south-east of Francheval."—Order to the infantry: "Direction: Balan—La Moncelle—Lamécourt.—At La Moncelle, not before, throw out two companies in advanced guard.—Order of march: No. 1 Troop—the first—second, and third battalions."

Order to the cavalry:—"Route: Balan—La Moncelle—Daigny—Givonne—La Virée Farm, and Villers-Cernay.—(1) Seize Villers-Cernay, or if that seems too dangerous, manœuvre it from the north-east until the arrival of the infantry.—(2) Move afterwards by the southern fringe of the forest of Ardennes to Pouru-Saint-Remy and the railway, where you will carry out whatever destructions you deem desirable.

1.20 p.m.—The cavalry starts.

1.25 p.m.—The infantry column starts.

*First Incident* (2 p.m.).—I am within sight of La Moncelle; a hostile troop was on the banks of the Givonne, it has been pushed back and scattered by the cavalry.—The troop carrying out immediate protective duties is on the further side of the Givonne.

Order to two companies of the first battalion and a cavalry section:—"I am going to move to Daigny under cover,—then on to Villers-Cernay. March ostensibly to Lamécourt via Rubécourt and Douzy; if you meet with opposition attack straight away."—Order to the second and third battalions

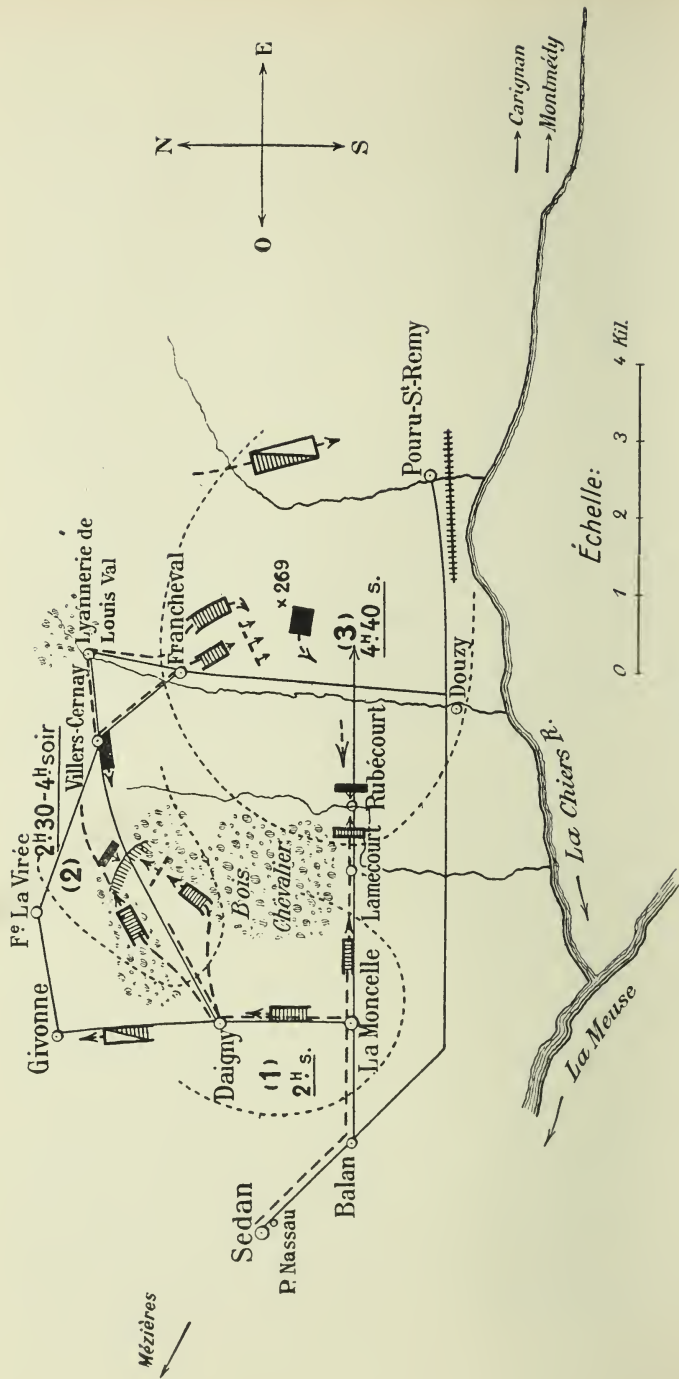
and two sections of cavalry : “ Direction—Daigny—Villers-Cernay.”

2.20 p.m.—I am at Daigny (regulation hourly halt).

*Second Incident* (2.30 p.m.).—Information from the troop of divisional cavalry :—“ The ridges to the south and south-west of Villers-Cernay are occupied by the enemy’s infantry.”—I decide to make a frontal attack (1)—on the <sup>crest</sup>~~west~~, (2)—on Villers-Cernay, (3)—I shall manœuvre therefore against Francheval, under cover of the woods, with one battalion to the <sup>left</sup>~~right~~ and another to the <sup>right</sup>~~left~~ in echelon.—Order to the second battalion and two sections of cavalry (manœuvring group) : “ Direction,—the woods to the left of the training-ground.” To the third battalion (attacking group) : “ To the right, in echelon, in the direction of the Chevalier wood. — Objectives : (1)—the crest, (2)—Villers-Cernay, (3)—Francheval.”—I lead the second battalion (manœuvring group).

3.15 p.m.—The third battalion makes an assault upon the ridge with one company, and outflanks it through the woods to the right.

The second battalion comes out on the heights to the left, and moves down towards the north of Villers-Cernay.—There are only two sections of the enemy there.—A hostile company advances from Villers-Cernay to reinforce them.—Finding itself outflanked to the north and south, it falls back on Villers-Cernay.—The two battalions push resolutely forward.



MAP 44.

4 p.m.—We are in possession of Villers-Cernay. The third battalion sends a company to Francheval, and with the main body moves forward under good cover in company columns in extended order to the south of the village.—The second battalion marches by La Lyanerie de Louis Val and moves down upon Francheval from the north.—The village is not held by the enemy.

4.20 p.m.—The third battalion moves by the south of Francheval to the tableland east of the village, and advances to point 269. The second battalion is ahead of it to the left, having marched east of Francheval, and reached the woods fringing the uplands to the north.

*Third Incident* (4.40 p.m.).—The third battalion, threatened in front by two hostile companies, attacks them.—The enemy is outflanked to the north by the second battalion.

2.20 p.m.—Our cavalry has turned Villers-Cernay from the north, and galloped into the village, where it surprised a hostile company in charge of a supply column, which has been thrown into confusion.—It afterwards galloped into Francheval, where it surprised and dispersed two sections of infantry in charge of convoys, and then advanced by the tableland towards Pouru-Saint-Remy, where it encountered two more hostile companies, and forced one of the enemy's squadrons engaged in destroying the railway near Sachy to retire eastwards. (End of scheme.)—MAJOR D.

*Criticism.*—You marched ostensibly on Lamécourt, Rubécourt, and Douzy.—The hostile commander would probably have placed his reserves in that direction.—You manœuvred by the north towards the source of the streams in close country. It was well you did so.—Had you manœuvred to the south by Douzy, you would have had to cross the tableland, which, so far as cover is concerned, is as bald as an egg.—You manœuvred the ridge at Villers-Cernay and Francheval in addition to the heights at point 269 as if you knew them to be occupied by the enemy.—You were, of course, perfectly right.—The possession of these points was essential to your plan, and your decision was amply justified.—Had they been occupied by the enemy he would not have had time to save himself.

You launched your attack in echelon, the left forward.—The interior echelon (in this case the right) had to bear the brunt of the attack.—It was given as objectives: (1)—the crest, (2)—Villers-Cernay, (3)—Francheval, (4)—point 269.—As it reached them you gradually outflanked them to the left with the echelon of your manœuvring group which you led yourself, and from which you could draw any necessary reinforcements for the assault by the third battalion.—I think these dispositions were the best you could have made.—Finally, you did not halt and begin a tedious fire fight, but took advantage of cover to advance.—You undoubtedly adopted the proper course.



With regard to your cavalry, you gave detailed instructions for its line of advance as far as Villers-Cernay.—It would have been sufficient to have given it in detail as far as Daigny, as it didn't cover your movements beyond that place.—You ordered it to hold Villers-Cernay—or if the village were occupied, to manœuvre it from the side opposite to your own line of advance till you came up yourself.—This was perfectly legitimate, for you were relying on this demonstration to assist you in your attack on Villers-Cernay.—The cavalry made some brilliant charges, and deserves praise, but it gave you no assistance in your attack on Villers-Cernay.—This was a mistake.—The cavalry should have dismounted two squadrons and attacked Villers-Cernay from the north.—It should also have sent a squadron on to Pouru-aux-Bois and the railway.—THE DIRECTOR.

To fight among trees it is necessary to advance in small columns of tactical units until you meet the enemy.—You then attack with the bayonet.\*—You were, I think, guided by this dominant principle; and in close country such as you were working over, there could be no other plan.

You left the enemy on the crest south-west of Villers-Cernay pinned down to the Daigny rifle ranges, which you passed by under cover.—You

\* “The Russian attack failed because, says the report, the cavalry were without bayonets.”—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.

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were in a position throughout to avail yourself of enfilade-fire.—You advanced, and the hostile company from Villers-Cernay was overwhelmed before it could even grasp what was happening.

It is very important to make provision for substantial tactical support.—In this case it was to be found between your two echelon leaders. Moral support\* exists in every unit where the men are working in groups.—As I understand it, we have here the real secret of deployment, and in this I am, I think, in agreement with the principles so forcibly laid down in our Infantry Regulations.—  
THE COLONEL.

As regards the dispositions for an attack in echelon, there are three methods of dealing with the reserve, or better still, of the manœuvring group:

(1) In rear, whence it can either advance to reinforce the first line, or else move to a flank to ward off a counter-attack.—In both these cases,

\* “Even with the most careful individual and thoroughly warlike training of the soldier, fighting power can never be fully developed unless both moral and mental factors are allowed ample scope—the unchangeable mainspring of all military achievements.”—KEIM: *The Present State of Tactical Science*.

“Discipline and drill, fear of punishment and hope of reward are no longer sufficient to induce the ordinary private to meet the dangers he will have to face in certain phases of a modern battle. We must therefore devote ourselves intelligently and incessantly to the development of the individual efficiency of the soldier. To raise them to the highest possible standard, so that every man shall be encouraged to make up his mind to conquer, no matter what the circumstances.”—HÆNIG: *The Tactics of the Future*.

however, the object is purely defensive, and therefore, according to our doctrine, self-condemned.

Or, (2) it may be sent to a wing to extend an outflanking movement.—But would such a movement bring pressure at the right place?—Inevitably it would be slow, and it could be easily counteracted either from the hostile flanks\* or by counter-attacks. Had you adopted this method of attack on the crest at Villers-Cernay, the engagement would not only have lasted till nightfall, but the enemy's reserves would have had time to return from Francheval.†

(3) In rear of one of the wings.—Should the front be extended, this is a sound disposition, but somewhat too conventional, perhaps, as it tells the enemy exactly what he may expect to deal with.

(4) In front of one of the wings.—This is the method you adopted with your own manœuvring group. It upsets the enemy's calculations—but only provided you decide upon your plans at once, and that you manœuvre at a distance from your objective, which you endeavour to take in flank.—I believe this to be one of the most

\* “After making a turning movement, we can no longer expect to come upon a weak flank, and to roll up an enemy's line.—We must rather expect, on reaching the enemy's flank, to find a difficult frontal attack before us.”—GOLTZ: *Das Volk in Waffen*.

† “We have no right to run the risk of again exposing our soldiers upon the field of battle with out-of-date equipment and obsolete tactical methods.”—DE NÉGRIER.

successful methods of attack.—You had three squadrons. Possibly two would have been sufficient to carry out the destruction of the railway near Pouru.—The third—and I admit it would have been only just numerous enough—might then have covered the echelon formation of the manœuvre.—  
THE BRIGADIER.

On this occasion the arm in which you were principally interested was incapable of rapid movement, yet speed was essential both for carrying out the intentions of the G.O.C., and for their ultimate success.

As a cavalry leader you manœuvred correctly, but it is clearly laid down by our Regulations that a forward movement must be preceded by a patrol (distant protection).—This rule must, of course, be obeyed by officers commanding mixed detachments.—You should have sent a cavalry reconnaissance ahead along the road you intended to follow.\*—It must be remembered, however, that this does not do away with the no less urgent necessity of detailing a force of divisional cavalry for immediate protection.—GENERAL X.

\* “Mixed detachments of variable strength encircle the army with a network virtually impenetrable by cavalry. They are composed of from twenty to forty horsemen, of half, or of one or two troops, as the case may be. Sometimes they are provided with artillery. The Japanese in this manner occupied all the passes and all the roads in the mountainous country of the Yalu, as they did later on in the south, at the beginning of June, the thirty-six villages from Bitzevo to Pulantien.”—DE NÉGRIER.

## No. 3.

*Scheme for Mixed Detachment.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking part.*—The Field Officers and Captains.

*Rendezvous* (April 20, 7 a.m.).—Bulson.

## PROBLEM R.

*General Idea.*—A hostile force (A) advancing from the camp at Châlons to the east, has crossed the Meuse at Mouzon, north of Stenay.—Its first line transport is still in the neighbourhood of Chesne.—A body of troops (B) from the north is manœuvring against A's left flank.—B is moving along the banks of the Chiers in the neighbourhood of Douzy and Brévilley.—A cavalry regiment with two machine-guns and a cyclist company is on the left bank of the Meuse near Bulson.

*Special Idea.*—A regiment of dragoons is at Bulson.—Its patrols report that a detachment of the enemy's infantry (about two battalions) is at La Neuville-à-Maire.—At 7 a.m. the regiment receives the following order:—"Douzy, 6 a.m.—General X to the Colonel commanding —th dragoons, Bulson:—I am informed that the enemy's transport column is in the neighbourhood of Chesne, and is advancing towards the Meuse. Endeavour to capture it, or at least retard its progress sufficiently to cause a considerable delay

before it can reach the Meuse.—I have placed the battalion now at Harancourt at your disposal.”—

GENERAL X.

*Summary of Scheme.*

*Mixed Detachment.*—Attack on a convoy

*Execution.*—The convoy can either cross the Meuse at Stenay or Mouzon, but it is unlikely to attempt the passage at the latter.—To reach Stenay it may march on Busancy and thence via Nouart to La Neuville; or it may travel by Stonne and Beaumont.

The presence of a hostile infantry detachment at La Neuville-à-Maire leads me to believe the latter is the route contemplated.—However this may be, I shall endeavour to contain the hostile infantry north of the Mont-Dieu woods with the battalion from Harancourt, the machine-guns and one squadron.—With the other three I shall move rapidly myself to Stonne and thence to Fossé, where I shall take my dispositions in accordance with circumstances.—I therefore give the following orders:—Reconnaissances:—The troop of scouts of the fourth squadron.—Direction: Les grandes Armoises.—Ascertain whether the hostile “convoy has followed the road from Chesne to Beaumont. Information to be forwarded to Stonne.” The troop of scouts of the second squadron: “Find out whether the convoy has marched via Briulles



—Saint-Pierremont, or by Busancy-Nouart.—Information to Stonne and Fossé.”

Order to the first squadron and two machine-guns: “I intend to make for the convoy.—Advance towards Artaise-le-Vivier and manœuvre against the hostile infantry reported at La Neuville-à-Maire.—Place yourself afterwards under the orders of the O.C. of the infantry battalion you will find at Mongarni Farm.”

Order to the battalion at Harancourt: “I am making for the convoy.—March to the Mongarni Farm via Raucourt.—Manœuvre thence against the hostile infantry which is reported to be at La Neuville-à-Maire.—A squadron with two machine-guns in the vicinity of Artaise-le-Vivier, is entrusted with a similar duty.—I place them under your command.”—My orders are enclosed.

7.30 a.m.—The reconnaissances left at 7 a.m.—I move off with the whole of the regiment, the first squadron and the machine-guns leading.—A troop of the second squadron is in advanced guard. Order of march:—second—third, and fourth squadrons;—the cyclist company;—a troop in rear-guard.

7.45 a.m.—I reach Maisoncelle.—Order to the first squadron and machine-gun section: “Direction Artaise-le-Vivier.”—To the regiment: “Direction Stonne.—Lieutenant X and eight men patrol ahead.”

Occupation of Stonne.—I intend to seize the

heights above Stonne from three directions simultaneously.—I give the order therefore to the cyclist company :—" Direction—La Besace, thence to Stonne."—To the second squadron : " Direction—Château Mairie, thence through the Mont-Dieu woods to the Grandes-Armoises road and Stonne." The movement to be carried out as swiftly as possible.

*First Incident* (8 a.m.).—I am at the northern boundary of the Mont-Dieu woods, rather less than a mile south of Artaise.—I hear the machine-guns firing in the vicinity of Artaise.—I continue to advance upon Stonne at the gallop.

*Second Incident* (8.15 a.m.).—There is a hostile squadron at Stonne ; it is attacked by the cyclist company.—I come out from the northern boundary of the woods south of Stonne on low ground.—Order to the third squadron : " Two troops ; dismounted action. Objective: the hostile squadron."

8.25 a.m.—The second squadron appears at the gallop coming along the Grandes-Armoises road.

8.30 a.m.—Information :—" The convoy is advancing from Chesne by Pont-à-Bar and Grandes-Armoises. — The head is already level with the farm at Nocièves.—There are about fifty waggons, with one or two companies of infantry as escort."—The three squadrons conceal themselves in the wood.—I intend to attack the convoy as it descends the hill from Stonne to La Besace.—The company of cyclists will tackle the head, a dis-

mounted squadron the flank, and two squadrons, mounted, the rear.

I arrange the ambush, therefore, as follows, and give the order to the cyclist company.—“Go to La Besace, make a frontal attack on the head of the convoy as soon as the first waggons reach the bottom of the hill.”—To the second squadron: “Go to the heights south of Stonne; dismounted action.—Objective: the escort.—On no account open fire before the cyclist company.”—I remain in the woods under cover with the two remaining squadrons, a mile and a quarter southwest of Stonne, about midway between the village and Les Grandes-Armoises.

*Third Incident* (9.20 a.m.). The convoy, preceded by one company and followed by a second in rear-guard, has begun to move down the hill to Stonne.

The head reaches the bottom of the descent and is about to cross the level towards Beaumont, when the cyclist company opens fire.

9.30 a.m.—The second squadron opens fire.—The waggons stop, the company in rear moves forward. I charge with my two squadrons.—End of scheme.

*Criticism.*—Capital. A straightforward operation.—I have noted the following points:—

1. Your detachment consisted of both cavalry and infantry.—The cavalry had to bear the main responsibility.—You commanded it yourself.—I think you were right.

2. You had a section of machine-guns.—Your

plan necessitated a rapid movement ; you therefore left them with the infantry.—This was justifiable.—

THE DIRECTOR.

I am glad to see in this scheme that the reconnaissances were again entrusted to, and ably carried out by, the scout troops.—The orders and information you received required rapidity both of execution and movement.—Had you waited to give detailed explanations to the four or five reconnaissances you had to send out to procure the information necessary to make certain of the situation, you would never have got away.

To the subalterns commanding the troops of scouts a word is sufficient.—They are accustomed to take in a situation quickly, and to carry out their orders with precision.—They will relieve you from all anxiety as far as their own duties are concerned, and you are certain of receiving the information you require.—THE COLONEL.

You sent Lieut. Y. on patrol towards Stonne and then manœuvred for its possession without waiting for further information.—As it happened it was occupied by a hostile squadron ; so much the better.—The one set of circumstances is not incompatible with the other.—I may remind you again, and I am glad of an opportunity of repeating it, that this is what is known as “setting out to meet information.”—You are quite right to advocate this method.—I am altogether in favour of it myself.—THE BRIGADIER.

DEFENSIVE-OFFENSIVE MANŒUVRE.

No. 4.

*Scheme for a Mixed Detachment.*—

*Director.*—The Lieut.-Colonel.

*Taking Part.*—The Field Officers.

*Rendezvous* (May 12, 7.30 a.m.).—Daigny training-ground (after drill).

PROBLEM S.

*General Idea.*—A body of troops (A) on the left bank of the Meuse is retiring from Mézières towards Mouzon.—A detachment of this force is on the right bank of the Givonne (Major L: two battalions, a cyclist section, and two squadrons of dragoons).

*Special Idea* (7.30 a.m.).—Major L's detachment is concentrated at Daigny.—He receives the following order :—" Pont-à-Bar, May 12th, 6.30 a.m. General X to C.O. detachment at Daigny :—The enemy, reported at Mézières, has begun an important offensive movement on both banks of the Meuse.—I am falling back on Mouzon :—rally at that point.—A strong hostile detachment (cavalry, artillery, and infantry) is reported in the vicinity of Ville-sur-Lumes (on the right bank), and is marching on Givonne to the south-east." (*Signed* General X.)—THE DIRECTOR.

Given to Major L in a sealed envelope at the beginning of the exercise.

*Summary of Report.*

*Mixed Detachment.*—Major L : Infantry against cavalry (rear-guard action).

*Execution.*—

*First Incident* (7.30 a.m.).—Before I have finished reading my orders I receive information that a hostile battalion is approaching Illy, and that there are six hostile squadrons at Olly.—To reach Mouzon I am obliged to cross the Chiers ; this is my most serious difficulty.—I intend to hold the bridge at Daigny at once with my cavalry, while I go myself in the direction of La Moncelle. I give the orders therefore—To the cavalry less one troop : “ Occupy the bridge over the Chiers at Douzy with all possible speed.—Keep a watch upon the bridge at Brévilley.—As soon as you have crossed the Chiers you will form the rear-guard.” To the cyclist section : “ Occupy the Bazeilles-Douzy road at Rulle as quickly as possible.”—To the infantry : “ Direction : La Moncelle—Lamécourt. — The Bazeilles - Douzy road — Mairy — Mouzon. One company and a troop in rear-guard.”

7.45 a.m.—The troop of cavalry engaged in divisional duties has been divided, one half remaining at the bridge over the Givonne at Givonne, the other at Daigny.—The cavalry and the cyclist section have already started.—The column begins its march.—I remain with the rear-guard.

*Second Incident* (8.15 a.m.).—I come out on the



uplands north of La Moncelle.—A hostile squadron from the direction of Bazeilles is engaging the cyclist section on the Rulle.—I am to the rear of La Moncelle.—The leading battalion changes front\* to the right and opens rapid fire at a range of 550 yards on the hostile cavalry, which disappears in the direction of the railway.—The march is resumed in the direction of the bridge at Douzy.—The cyclist section has rejoined the cavalry.

*Third Incident* (8.45 a.m.).—The head of the column is at Douzy.—I am on the left of the second battalion.—The company in rear-guard is at the Rulle.—Two hostile squadrons suddenly appear coming down the road from Bazeilles.—I send back an order to the company in rear-guard, which has deployed and is firing at the enemy, to rejoin.

*Fourth Incident* (9 a.m.).—The column has crossed the Chiers.—The company in rear-guard, still deployed, is engaged with the enemy's cavalry facing Bazeilles.—A hostile cavalry regiment with artillery appears on the tableland above Rubécourt and opens fire upon the rear-guard.

*Criticism.* — You ordered your cavalry and cyclists, very sensibly, to hold the bridges over the Chiers and Rulle till you came up.—There was no point, however, in telling them to watch Brévilly.

\* "The army of General Kaulbars had been forced to change its front while still actually engaged, this giving a proof of its remarkable cohesion."—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.

The cavalry should have done this without requiring any further order.—You told off a rear-guard composed of one company and a troop.—You did not remain with it.—The Captain commanding, left to himself, could not resist the temptation to engage in a fight “on his own” by the Rulle, and, in accordance with old custom, deployed.—This company handicapped you from the first, and had finally to be left to extricate itself as best it could. In my opinion you committed a mistake.—The fourth incident is in itself sufficient proof of this.

You should have marched without a rear-guard. The first battalion should have been responsible for your protection in front and to the right and left, while the second battalion should have undertaken similar duties in rear.

Against cavalry?—You should have been content to keep it at a distance by fire action without deploying, as in the Second Incident (8.15 a.m.). Your safety depended upon your getting away as quickly as possible.—THE DIRECTOR.

Infantry is in the habit of deploying at the first shot.\*—I refer, of course, to small formations only. This method is really due to the peculiar cult born of the unavoidable restrictions of garrison life and training.—A company of infantry necessarily be-

\* “On June 15, at Vafangu, the infantry had advanced to the attack in four lines, the two first skirmishers, the third in double rank, the fourth in company-column. It thus executed the famous ‘decisive attack’ so persistently advocated by the old school.”—DE NÉGRIER: *Russo-Japanese War*.

comes accustomed to working alone, without cavalry.—It is usual for it to march, therefore, within the narrow limits of its own protective elements.—It suffers incessantly from nerves, and at the least shadow of resistance instantly deploys. This is at once its principal asset and characteristic. It never fails to make the most of it, and it is only after the completion of this evolution, which, more often than not, is as elaborate in execution as it is useless, that the march is resumed.—All this not only entails useless fatigue, but, what is far more serious, it creates a whole school of inexperienced leaders who have never carried out any practical work on a more extensive ground than that which they are able to see in front of their own noses.—It would be impossible to over-estimate the advantage it would be to infantry if, during its various periods of training, it were to be allowed a suitable complement of cavalry to work with in proportion to its own strength—say, a section to a company, or a troop to a battalion.—This cavalry would be responsible for (1) immediate protection, and would thus not only relieve infantry from its never absent fear of a surprise, but it would save it from the fatigue of tiring and unnecessary deployments.\*—(2) Cavalry, by moving further

\* “During the advance of the 1st Prussian Army Corps on Trantenan (in 1866) much time was lost by the right column, owing to the fact that the country on both sides of the road was searched by infantry, a work which prematurely fatigued the troops of this particular arm. Preferably, divisional cavalry

afield in search of information, would free the Infantry Leader from his smaller worries and anxieties, and thus give him an opportunity to understand the principle and even to welcome the practice of manœuvring.—THE COLONEL.

The method of giving the scheme to the officer concerned in a sealed envelope at the beginning of the exercise not only teaches him to take in the situation promptly, but to come to a rapid decision.—It has the further merit of supplying an easy method of ascertaining the capacity of any individual leader.

It cannot be too often repeated—speed is the soul of manœuvre.—(1) Has a plan been quickly decided upon?—(2) Has it been swiftly carried out? These are the two essential points which criticism should never cease to emphasize.—You should have referred to them in the discussion.—Major L began his march on Douzy at 7.45, a long quarter of an hour after he was in possession of the knowledge of the situation (7.30).—The troops were already assembled.—He ought to have decided upon his plans with greater promptitude, and given out his orders as he marched.—THE BRIGADIER.

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should have been used for these flank patrols, especially as it was only the enemy's cavalry with which it was concerned.

“Owing to the infantry being thus employed, the march was prolonged several hours, and it became impossible to occupy the important outlet of Trantenan in sufficient strength in proper time.”—KUHNE: *Kritische und Unkritische Wanderungen über die Gefechtsfelder der Preussischen Armeen in Böhmen*, 1866.

No. 5.

*Mixed Detachment.*—

*Director.*—The Director.

*Taking Part.*—The Field Officers and Captains.

*Rendezvous* (July 5, 6 a.m.).—Étrepigny.

PROBLEM T.

*General Idea.*—A body of infantry is concentrating at Mézières.—A covering detachment (a battalion of infantry with a squadron of dragoons commanded by Major D) has been sent out along the left bank of the Meuse, towards Étrepigny and Boutancourt.—The enemy is reported advancing from the south-east upon Sedan.

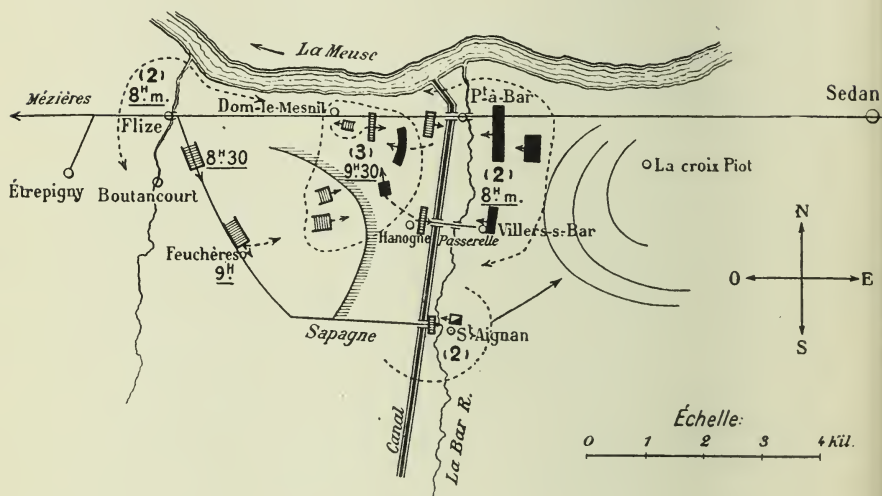
*Special Idea.*—Major D's detachment is at Étrepigny with observation posts on the river-side at Boutancourt.—The squadron has assembled at Étrepigny.—At 6 a.m. Major D receives the following information (orders found on a prisoner): "A detachment—two battalions and a squadron—will leave Sedan at 7 a.m. and reconnoitre towards Mézières via Donchery and the left bank of the river."—At the same time he is informed (from Mézières) that a second battalion which has been placed under his orders will be at Flize at 8 a.m.—THE DIRECTOR.

Given at Étrepigny to Major D in a sealed envelope, to be opened at the beginning of the exercise.

*Summary of Scheme.*

*Mixed Detachment* (Defensive-offensive manœuvre).—Major D.

*Execution.*—I intend to organize my defence with the battalion (M) which I now possess, on the stream at Boutancourt, and wait for the arrival of the second battalion to reinforce me.



MAP 45.

The proximity of the Elan woods is a dangerous menace, but the Bar and the Canal are an even more serious obstacle.—I shall base my defensive and offensive manœuvre upon them.—It is my intention to hold the enemy with battalion M (group of attack based on the Bar). This battalion will be able to contain the enemy while I march with the second battalion (group of manœuvre) via



Feuchères and Saint Aignan, and then turn inwards upon Croix Piot in rear of the enemy.

Objective, therefore : Croix Piot.—Order to the group of attack (M battalion and one squadron) : “Go to the Bar, Pont-à-Bar, and Hanogne, and defend the passages across the river to the rear. Hold out, if possible, till at least 9 a.m., when I shall be at Feuchères and you must get into touch with me. A section of infantry will hold the bridge over the Bar at Saint Aignan ; it must be in position by 7.30 a.m.

Order to the cavalry (detached troop), Captain D : “Hold the bridge over the Bar at Saint Aignan until the arrival of the infantry.—Send out patrols towards Croix-Piot and Sedan.—On being relieved at Saint Aignan you will cover my movement upon Croix Piot.—I shall remain in the neighbourhood of Flize with two sections of cavalry, and wait for the battalion in reinforcement.

*First Incident* (7.30 a.m.).—I hear firing towards Pont-à-Bar (a hostile squadron is repulsed first at Pont-à-Bar, then at Hanogne).

*Second Incident* (8 a.m.).—Battalion M is attacked by two hostile battalions along the front Pont-à-Bar—Hanogne.—A hostile squadron is repulsed at Saint Aignan by the infantry and is pursued by the three troops of cavalry.

The battalion in reinforcement arrives at Flize.—Orders to this battalion : “Direction : Charlemagne Farm—Feuchères—Sapogne—Saint Aignan

—Croix Piot.” — To the cavalry : “ Sergeant X and three men, patrol ahead. Two sections for immediate protection forward.”

*Third Incident* (9 a.m.).—I am at Feuchères. A few hostile cavalry patrols are on the Charlemagne plateau.—Order to Lieut. H commanding the protective cavalry : “ Go with one section to Major M near Hanogne, tell him if I receive no further information I shall march on Saint Aignan at 9.20.”—As I am speaking, an infantry Captain arrives from Major M.—He reports that battalion M is being sharply attacked and probably won’t be able to hold out more than another half-hour.—I abandon my projected movement on Saint Aignan and at once decide to entice the enemy down into the valley after battalion M, and manœuvre against his flank and rear from the direction of the plateau.—I give the order, therefore, to battalion M : “ Retire on Dom-le-Mesnil along the valley, I rely upon your drawing the enemy after you.—I shall then attack in flank and rear.”—Order to the cavalry at Saint Aignan : “ I have abandoned the movement upon Saint Aignan and shall attack the enemy between Hanogne and Dom-le-Mesnil.—Act independently.”—I then lead the battalion towards point E on the heights above Hanogne.

*Fourth Incident* (9.30 a.m.).—I am with the battalion (manœuvring group) at the boundary of the plateau, above Hanogne Mill.—Two of my

sections are engaging a squadron of the enemy which is fighting dismounted on the heights above Hanogne. Down below, in the valley, a hostile battalion is marching upon Dom-le-Mesnil held by battalion M.—A second battalion is climbing up to the plateau facing its eastern escarpment.—Order to the battalion:—"Fix bayonets! Direction: Hanogne."

The battalion comes out on to the slope. I order the bugler to sound the charge;\* the call is heard and responded to by battalion M.—(End of scheme.)

*Criticism.*—A quick decision and prompt execution.—You relied upon the Bar as an impassable obstacle, and boldly sent your battalion (M) right up to it while you waited for the battalion in support.—Your movement reminds me of the action of a man who, attacked by a hooligan, goes for him covered by his left, till he has an opportunity

\* "The Russian troops commenced to move. When they were within easy range we greeted them with a quick fire of two to three minutes' duration. I noticed deep gaps in their lines, which were promptly filled up. They were allowed to approach as far as the foot of the hill. Then one bugle sounded the charge; a dozen others responded. . . . Nearer and nearer we came; we heard the Russian 'Hurrah!' Wild cries of 'Allah!' were raised, and drowned individual voices; commands became useless. Now only a hundred paces between the charging lines—they up, and we down hill—at last there was a collision like that between two railway trains.—A chaos of stabbing, clubbing, hacking, clutching, shouting, cursing, screaming men."—HERBERT: *The Defence of Plevna.*

to get in with his right.—It is the offensive in the defensive.—THE DIRECTOR.

At Feuchères, with your second battalion perfectly fresh, you had a splendid opportunity to manœuvre as you pleased,—thus confirming the principle demonstrated in one of the foregoing schemes, that the position of the manœuvring group should be upon a flank.—In addition to this, the leader must be wherever the manœuvre is to take place.\*

There are two points in this scheme which it is well to emphasize.—(1) By occupying the bridges over the Bar before the arrival of your second battalion, you intercepted the enemy's reconnaissances.—It was essential that you should do so.—At the same time, it was the best way to cover your manœuvre. — (2) The connection between the two battalions was faulty. Major M was compelled to send you a message by a Captain, as he had to avail himself of a mounted Officer. — This should have been foreseen, and it would have been better to have employed a Divisional Cavalry Officer for this duty.—Again, the Captain might have had some difficulty in finding you.—Once on the Feuchères road with your second battalion, you should have sent a Cavalry Officer to Major M.—He would have been certain of finding you when sent back by

\* “My presence was indispensable if I wished for victory.”—  
NAPOLEON.

Major M with information.—Battalion B should have established connection with you in a similar manner.—THE COLONEL.

As regards the maintenance of contact, the point here raised with respect to connection relates to the mere transmission of correspondence.—Such communication is a necessity, and the criticism clearly defines the character of its organization.—So much admitted, it is right to exercise caution.—There is connection of a higher order.—Connection should mean the whole-hearted co-operation of every unit, with a view to the smooth working of the manœuvre and its ultimate success.—Beyond everything it is that which the leader has been able to mould it into, for it is the actual communion with the leader and with his idea.—So it is with the order given.—Where the directing idea is non-existent, connection must have a fictitious nature, however well established it may be from a technical point of view.

On August 16, during the Battle of Rezonville, about two in the afternoon, the French General commanding the 6th Corps noticed a marked slackening in the efforts of the enemy on the side of Trouville.—He felt that a victory was to be achieved by making an attack upon the woods of Vionville.—He was on the point of giving the order for it to be carried out: when Bredow's charge took place. . . .—The initial directing impulse was wanting, and the decision melted away.



In the evening the General commanding the 4th Corps on the extreme right noticed that the Prussian lines terminated towards Mars-la-Tour.—The Cissey division had driven back the Wadel brigade into the ravine of La Cuve.—It was felt that victory must lie in the direction of Mars-la-Tour.—The corps was about to march, and all began to prophesy “there was still a great day in store for France.”—Two divisions of cavalry were within reach.—Information was desirable, and the division of Legrand was directed towards the south.—There was the charge of Ville-sur-Yron, an incident of a few minutes.—The directing initiative was wanting, and in consequence the decision vanished.—Then, as the shades of evening deepened, night fell upon the battlefield, which a few hours later was abandoned to the enemy, and the fate of the campaign itself decided.

On April 30 the 2nd Japanese Army, assembled on the left bank of the Yalou, in front of the Russian position, received the following order:—“The army will cross the river.—The twelfth division will take as its objective the line A B—the guard the line B C—the second division the line C D.”—Everybody waited for the hour fixed for crossing.—Communication between the general headquarters and the divisions, as well as that between the divisions themselves, had been established during the few days the army had been on the banks of the Yalou with a thorough-



ness which, while it was remarked upon at the time, has since won the admiration of the whole modern military world. — The conciseness and brevity of the order given were both extraordinary. With their cheery optimism, the Japanese carried all the objectives assigned to them. — As soon as the lines B C and C D had been reached, and while the twelfth division was marching beyond the line A B, the guard and the second division halted in the conquered position and entrenched themselves. — Thanks to the communication which had been established, orders swiftly followed, and only two hours later the forward movement was resumed. — As it was, the Russian retreat was evidently a matter of extreme difficulty: had the movement of the Japanese previously directed to a point further forward not been interrupted, it would have meant disaster.

At Ulm, in 1805, General Mack, finding himself on the point of being surrounded, decided on an attempt to escape by the north. — On the left bank of the Danube General Dupont was alone with only his own division — Before him there were more than 60,000 of the enemy. — He received no special orders, and neither asked nor waited for any. — Intercommunication? — He had understood the Emperor's idea. — If Mack were to escape, the manœuvre would be compromised. — The General did not hesitate. — He attacked, and the Austrians, surprised, renounced their movement. — Again, the

well - remembered Battle of Haslach is but a further example.

Here we see the real significance of intercommunication.—THE DIRECTOR.

### NO. 6.

*Scheme of Staff Exercise to be carried out from  
2nd to 9th August, 1907.*

(Mixed Detachment of Infantry and Cavalry.)

The personal idea of the Leader and the Manœuvre.

*Taking Part.*—The Director, the Lieutenant-Colonel, and the Officers.

*Rendezvous* (August 6th).—Remilly, 6 a.m.

### EXERCISE U.

*General Situation.*—A brigade of infantry advancing from the west is assembled on the east of the Ardennes Canal with a view to a subsequent movement towards the Meuse.—On August 5 the headquarters of the brigade, one regiment (A), a battery, and one squadron, are at Chesne. — A second regiment (B) with a squadron are in Sedan.

*Special Situation.*—On the night of August 5-6 the regiment B is quartered in Sedan.—At two o'clock the Colonel commanding receives the following order : “ Le Chesne (12.10 a.m., General X to Colonel commanding, Regiment B) :—I intend this

morning to assemble the brigade to the east of Sonne with a view to a subsequent movement on Stenay.—March therefore via Remilly and Raucourt to La Besace, where the brigade should be assembled by 10 a.m.—A hostile battalion with cyclists and artillery is at Beaumont.—(*Signed—General X.*)”—THE DIRECTOR.

*Summary of Staff Exercise carried out on  
August 6, 1907.*

(Infantry on the march threatened upon one of its flanks.)

*Execution.*—The route given follows the Meuse as far as Remilly—thence, by the much enclosed valley of Ennemane, it leads straight to Raucourt; afterwards leaving the enclosed country it strikes off towards La Besace.—From Remilly to Raucourt the right bank of the river is closely hemmed in and dominated by the wooded heights above.—On a level with Raucourt the tableland expands; the valley, which is completely open in this section, being dominated by the village of Flaba, where all the lines of communication leading from Beaumont and the neighbourhood converge.—I can execute my movement in two ways:—(1) I can reach La Besace by the road mentioned, protecting my left flank by means of flank guards.—This is the conventional method.—The enemy advancing from Beaumont will probably be unable seriously to

disturb my march.—On the other hand, he will be virtually free to do as he likes.

Or (2): I can march to La Besace, manœuvring by the left so as to take my opponent at a disadvantage, and hold him at my mercy before he has made his preparations for fighting.—I decide to adopt the latter course.

Order No. 1: It is my intention ostensibly to march via Remilly and along the valley with the whole of the column; then to allow the head to continue directly upon La Besace and entice the enemy towards it, while I go with the main body along the heights and covered country on the left so as to take him in rear.

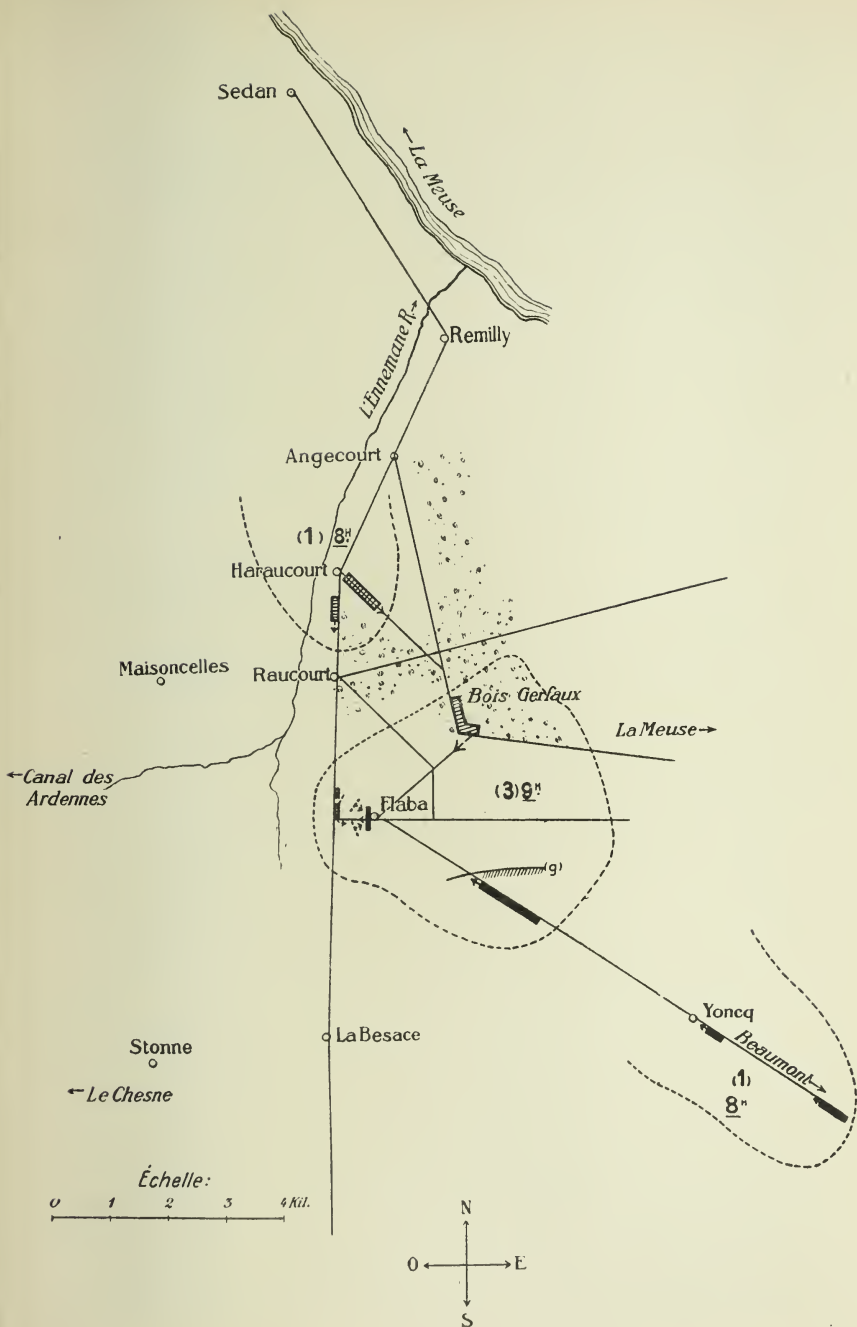
The following order is therefore given to the cavalry :—" March, via Remilly, towards Raucourt, as far as the exit from the defile, which you will hold from 6 a.m., until the arrival of the infantry.—From this place push forward reconnoitring parties from the direction of Beaumont towards Raucourt and Haraucourt.—Reports towards Haraucourt—Angecourt—Remilly, until 8 a.m."

To Regiment B :—Route :—Valedincourt — Remilly—Angecourt—Haraucourt—La Besace.

Order of March : First battalion—second battalion—third battalion.—Baggage train—advanced guard—two companies.

Point of departure : Railway-station, Sedan.

Hour for the main body of the advanced guard to pass the initial point : 5 a.m.



I march with the advanced guard.

*First Incident* (8 a.m.). — The cavalry is at Raucourt.—The advanced guard of the regiment is beyond Haraucourt.

*Information* (Yoncq, 7 a.m.): A company, not visible, is coming from Beaumont and moving towards Yoncq.—It is about three-quarters of a mile to the south of that place, marching along the road.—A hostile battalion, with artillery, left Beaumont this morning at 6.45, and is marching upon Yoncq.

Order No. 2.: It is my intention to keep the company which is still invisible fixed at Flaba, so as to entice the hostile battalion there, while with the main body I go through the woods to the left of the plateau and descend upon Flaba.—I therefore give the following orders :

To the cavalry : “ I am going with the main body of the regiment by the Haraucourt Road to the farm at Montjoie, thence to Point 329, and along the western fringe of the Gerfaux woods.—March to Montjoie Farm, where I shall arrive at 8.30—cover my movement from there.—On reaching the southern boundary of the Gerfaux woods I desire to know :—(1) The dispositions taken by the enemy at Flaba and its vicinity ;—(2) the whereabouts of the hostile battalion reported to be marching from Beaumont to Yoncq.”

To the first battalion : “ With the convoy, direction : Raucourt—La Besace.—Parallel with Flaba.



Push one company forward to this point as an offensive reconnaissance, and if necessary support it.

To the main body : "Direction, Montjoie Farm—Point 329—The Gerfaux woods.—One troop in advanced guard.—I march with the advanced guard."

*Second Incident* (8.30).—I am at Montjoie Farm.—The cavalry has gone on in a southerly direction.—Information.—Near Flaba, 8 a.m.—A hostile cyclist company has been seen entering Flaba, and is taking up a position facing the Raucourt-La Besace road.

Order to the first battalion : "In the direction of Raucourt.—Information forwarded.—I continue my movement."

*Third Incident* (9 a.m.).—I am on the southern fringe of the Gerfaux woods.—Firing is heard from the direction of Flaba.—The first battalion has engaged two companies.—The cavalry, which has emerged from the woods of Yoncq, retires towards Raucourt.—I can distinctly make out a column of hostile infantry, about a battalion strong, with artillery issuing from the woods of Yoncq and marching towards Flaba.—I remain concealed.

*Fourth Incident* (9.15).—The hostile column is marching upon Flaba.—It is about three-quarters of a mile away.—It moves out of sight owing to the rolling nature of the ground.—I march directly upon Flaba in battalion echelons, the left in front.

*Fifth Incident* (9.30).—On coming out on to

the plateau the left battalion, at the head of the column, is received with rifle fire from the crest G. Order to the leading company: "Objective, the crest G."—To the main body: "Direction, Flaba." (End of exercise.)\*

*Criticism.*—It is possible that the enemy was surprised; the operation, however, calls for some observation notwithstanding.—On leaving Haraucourt you placed yourself in a defile with two sections in advanced guard.—This I think was insufficient.—You placed your cavalry correctly for the success of your manœuvre; but you kept none in reserve for your immediate safety on the one hand, and on the other you detached none to accompany the first battalion.—These may be details, but they are not unimportant.

Your dispositions were characterized by audacity and justified by success, but they were dictated by a preconceived idea.—By marching in the direction of the enemy across the plateau you were exposing yourself to the risk of being drawn into a disadvantageous combat, and consequently of being unable to reach your rendezvous to join your brigade.—By following the route given, had you been exposed to a serious menace, you might have escaped in the direction of Maisoncelles.—  
THE DIRECTOR.

In exercises, where it is a question of acquiring

\* This exercise is an exact reproduction of a manœuvre executed by troops on active service.

practice, simple problems are beyond everything desirable—problems which give the Leader no scope for dilatory methods.—The problem given should place him, within limits, in the presence of a perfectly concrete situation, and confine him to the necessity of coming to and carrying out an offensive decision.—He must be made a Commander-in-Chief on a small scale, called upon and left free to act in his own theatre of operations, without any thought about intercommunication, expediency, or anything else, providing him with a pretext to follow an inflexible rule or to evade it. He must act untrammelled. Here the concentration of the brigade, it is true, was the main object.—If, the better to attain his end, the Leader avoids the enemy and marches towards Maisoncelles, he will have achieved his mission?—Perhaps!—But he won't, in any case, have given the measure of his efforts, and still less that of his work.—Should this become a habit, exercises of such a nature would appear to be somewhat dangerous.—In the case of to-day's manœuvre this would have been a pity.

The plan preconceived!—Certainly it was.—It was arrived at and decided upon, and the means were determined with a view to carrying it out.—I certainly cannot complain of this.

It is necessary to know how to encourage the art of war, and to effect this, catch problems incapable of solution should not be given.—They can only tend to a deterioration both of character

and mind.—Let us, then, be doubly careful to say nothing in our criticisms likely to counteract the spirit of the initiative.—Wherever there is a personal idea, even if it is open to argument and dispute—as it always must be—we should welcome it.—After all, the art of war consists in crushing the enemy.—To do this it is our duty—in imitation of every living thing desirous of overcoming an opponent—to construct and perfect the means by which alone we can achieve the end in view.—Let us complete our preparations, as far as it lies in human power to do so, while we have yet time.—Let us formulate our plans and realize them, and, whether in success or in defeat, let us never evade our individual and national responsibilities.

Finally, let it be said of all of us who have been trained in the faith of individual responsibility, with the authoritative voice of our Regulations for our guide, that we not only belong to the school which moulds character and temperament, but to that which creates Leaders and promotes Merit.—  
THE COLONEL.

## APPENDIX I

### OFFICER'S PATROLS

LIEUT. STUMM'S PATROL, AUGUST 6, 1870.

THE 13th Division belonging to the 7th German Army Corps from Hutterdsdorf had been ordered to debouch on the Sarre at Wolklingen.—At twelve noon General von der Goltz, commanding the advanced guard, gave the following order to Lieut. Stumm of the 8th Hussars :

“Pick out one N.C.O. and twelve men from the third squadron, and at once reconnoitre the left bank of the Sarre.—Push on as quickly as possible to Saint Avold, where the main body of the enemy is believed to be.—In particular thoroughly reconnoitre the rear and left flank of his position.—If necessary, you will remain out two or three days. You will act quite independently, and on your own initiative.—Send back information as soon and as often as possible.”

Stumm immediately (12.5) crossed the Sarre.—At 6 p.m. he sent in the following report from the neighbourhood of Saint Avold (about fourteen miles from Wolklingen): “I am within a couple of miles of Saint Avold, and have seen nothing of the enemy. The whole of their forces appear to have gone to

Forbach, where we can hear firing.—The last French patrol was seen at seven this morning at Carling. It appears there are a few hundred men in camp near Saint Avold. I am advancing in that direction. . . .”

Riding down the road from Carling to Saint Avold, Stumm met a pedlar who informed him there was a hostile infantry detachment three or four hundred paces further on, that Saint Avold was strongly occupied, and that some General officers with their Staffs were there.

To continue along the road itself was obviously to run the risk of being shot.—It was no less certain there was nothing to be seen in that direction. Advantage should have been taken of the cover afforded by the wood to creep up to its edge.—If necessary the patrol could have remained within the wood while the officer crept forward.—A road assists in extending the range of vision. Swords should never be drawn unless it is impossible to move within sight without doing so.\* Should you be forced to fight, attack with vigour; but, as a general rule, a reconnaissance must contrive to see without being seen.†—Stumm, on the

\* In reconnaissance the great object is to see. Fighting is merely a means to this end. An officer's patrol must trust for its safety chiefly to its mobility.—FELD-DIENST-ORDNUNG.

† “The most difficult problem all along was to obtain information. The patrols everywhere ran up against infantry or dismounted cavalry. To force the enemy's line even at a point known to be favourable by a cavalry charge was an enterprise too hazardous to attempt. Swiftly and effectively squeezed within the meshes of the screen, the loss of the attacking



contrary, ordered his men to draw swords, and continued to trot along the road!—He paid the penalty with greeting of a sharp rifle fire at a range of some 400 paces, and he was himself slightly wounded.—The patrol turned about, and managed to regain the wood.—It was a useful lesson.

Making its way under cover the patrol reached the southern boundary of the wood about half a mile west of the spot on the main road where it had been fired upon. Saint Avold was now visible rather more than a mile away.—Midway to the town Stumm was able to discern a hostile camp of all arms. On the heights beyond there was another camp, and on the railway a military train. He had in front of him the Clérambault Cavalry Division as well as that of the Decaen Infantry.

He at once wrote a second report which he sent off through the woods to Lanterbach.—He ought to have sent duplicate copies by two different routes.—Firstly because of the danger to be expected owing to the enemy's numbers; and, secondly, because the report was doubly important, owing to the misleading information contained in his first message—*i.e.*, "The whole of the enemy's forces appear to have gone to Forbach."

Having ascertained from some peasants that there was another camp at Boucheporn, Stumm,

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column would have been almost inevitable. After a few successful ventures, General Samzonoff soon began to realize that isolated scouts, penetrating singly or in pairs to the heart of the enemy's lines, were able to bring back the most reliable information."—  
DE NÉGRIER.

in spite of the increasing darkness, made for this place, recrossing Carling at the gallop, fearing an ambush.—He had at last learnt prudence. Arriving at the fringe of the woods, he came upon a mill. Here he halted his troop while he went to the building with three men and compelled the miller to bring food, forage, and water for the detachment, which had had nothing since morning. While this was going on, Stumm made his way along the edge of the wood, and was rewarded by sighting the camp fires at Boucheporn (Grenier's Division). He at once wrote a third report, and forwarded it in duplicate by two orderlies, an indispensable precaution in the dark.

The patrol spent the night—each man by his horse—in the wood without being disturbed.—On the 7th, about 3 a.m., three men were sent forward towards the camp at Boucheporn. Strong hostile patrols prevented their advance; it was able, however, to ascertain the arrival of fresh troops (the Lorencez Division).

At 4 a.m. the whole patrol, still under cover of the woods, made for Grunhöff Farm, with the object of obtaining food.—While making the requisition shots were suddenly heard. The men on vedette duty, who had galloped in, reported the arrival of a French Squadron followed by infantry.\* Stumm

\* "The Japanese cavalry were invariably protected by infantry, and on the march continued to cover themselves, as they did when halted, by a screen consisting of groups of cavalry and infantry combined, which the Russian patrols were unable to pierce. A few officer scouts and some Chinese spies were their only sources of information."—DE NÉGRIER.

at once hastened off to Diesen, and thence to the place where he had spent the night.—But he had been seen.—The French Dragoons were endeavouring to surround him.—He trotted to Carling, where he came upon two hostile squadrons; he had only just time to dash into the woods, which he ought never to have left.—When a patrol has been once seen, there is a general “view holloa,” and as likely as not it will be run to earth.

Clear at last, thanks to the shelter of the woods, Stumm made for the uplands south of Creutzwold, whence in the distance, on the heights of Longeville, he was able to make out masses of troops, which were being apparently augmented every moment. It was the guard which had arrived during the night.

He was now able to send General von der Goltz information of supreme importance to the army.—This report reached the 13th Division at Forbach at 9.30 a.m.—It was forwarded on, both to the G.O.C. 7th Corps, who received it at Sarrebruck at noon, and to the headquarters of the 1st Army, which received it at 7 p.m.—It was only transmitted, however, to general headquarters twenty-eight hours later! This delay was a serious error on the part of the staffs concerned. Belated, the most trustworthy information becomes worthless.

At Creutzwold Stumm received an order to rejoin.—Apart from his initial imprudence, his patrol was cleverly led and he acted with energy and common sense.

### 1. *With Regard to the Mission Itself.*

In accordance with the needs of the operation he is conducting, the Leader should himself decide the *distance* whence the information is to be sought, as well as the *time limit* within which it must be received.

It was 10 p.m. before the G.O.C. 13th Division received Stumm's first report, which had been written at 6 p.m.—When, however, at 2 p.m., the division reached Wolklingen and turned towards Forbach, it would have been of considerable assistance to the General to have known whether the enemy was then at Forbach, Saint Avold, etc.

In order to obtain this intelligence the patrol should have been sent out betimes, and the exact information required should have been clearly indicated by definite questions to which only definite answers should have been given.

As a matter of fact, this officer was given too big a job. . . . The General Commanding the Army should have located the French concentrations, . . . while the officer commanding the advanced guard should have found out the conditions under which the division intended to march upon Forbach.

### 2. *Conditions Affecting the March of a Reconnaissance.*

(a) A patrol does not follow a route, nor does it search a zone.—It is governed by a guiding principle.—Stumm discovered a considerable force

of the enemy at Saint Avold, and forthwith leaves them to their own devices in order to go on to Bouchepon and afterwards to Longeville.—But, meanwhile, what was going on at Saint Avold? What was the enemy, which he had been specially ordered to watch, doing there?—This question alone affords ample proof of the necessity for organized reconnaissance. However important it may be to obtain information, it is quite useless to order a task impossible of achievement.—Stumm, moreover, could not be everywhere at once.—Nothing less than a detachment can ascertain the actual situation along an extended front.

(b) The safety of a patrol lies in its mobility. Every advance, however, may prove critical, as the least movement may reveal its presence and observation thus becomes increasingly difficult.—Time taken up by actual movements must be reduced to a minimum by taking all possible advantage of the ground, and by making every bound at the utmost speed.

(c) Woods are invaluable to patrols. . . .

(d) This patrol had only covered twelve and a half miles in six hours.—Not very much to make a song about when it is remembered that it had been ordered to reach Saint Avold as quickly as possible, and that a portion of the march took place on German soil.—On the other hand, it would be unfair to expect a patrol to move as though it were taking part in a mere steeplechase.

During manœuvres surprise is frequently expressed at the lack of information.—This is simply



due to the fact that patrols are not given sufficient time for observation.—It is as though they were invariably expected to move at the gallop ;—and what is the result ?—Unable to see, they either forward no information at all, or, if they do, it is virtually valueless.

### 3. *Method of Making Observations.*

(a) A patrol must never be over-hampered.—It must be capable of slipping away anywhere, and of taking advantage of every scrap of cover so as *to see without being seen*.—Its organization must be perfect.—Not only men but horses must be specially selected.—If a leader possesses the knack of interesting his men they very soon become extraordinarily keen. . . . So as to obtain the utmost power of endurance horses should be at least ten years old.—Finally, it is not enough for the Leader to be energetic ; it is necessary that this essential quality should be combined with those of prudence, craftiness, and foresight.

(b) Observations can only be adequately taken when halted.—Although far too often ignored, this is an indisputable fact.—An officer must see, therefore, that his patrol advances by bounds from post of observation to post of observation.—The choice of these points must be thought out beforehand, with due regard to the tactical situation, in conjunction with a careful study of the map. . . . Officers should be able to pick out halting-places whence they can best command the country in the



particular direction in which they are chiefly interested.—They can then fold up their maps, as on reaching their destination they will be already familiar with the character of the ground.

It is quite evident that Stumm never consulted his map. . . . His movements were entirely happy-go-lucky. Had he only asked himself the eternal question, “What ought I to do?” there could have been but one answer—“Watch Saint Avold.”

To do that was it necessary to go there?—The answer is to be found upon the map.—Go to the spur south of Porcellette.—Not only can Saint Avold be seen, but all the heights occupied by the French camps beyond.—At this point Stumm ought to have dismounted and carefully scanned the horizon with his glass. Field-glasses can never be too powerful nor too clear. . . . Without a glass it may be possible to make out moving objects, but nothing is distinct.—It is next to impossible to spot a vedette in front of trees, or a marksman behind a hedgerow.—A really fine glass makes it possible for an officer to scan far beyond the zone of the enemy’s patrols, and gives him time to write his report in peace, instead of having to shout his information as he gallops to an agitated orderly who will tear off to headquarters, if not with an actual fable, at least with a disjointed story diametrically opposed to facts.\*

\* “Excitement is dangerously infectious. A staff officer galloping up with an order to a column in a high state of excitement may play havoc with the nerves of the men, and lead them to infer either that there is some unknown danger, or that

—On patrol duty a good field-glass is as essential to an officer as a sword or revolver !

#### 4. *Reports must be Accurate.*

Lieut. Stumm reported in writing that he was “within a couple of miles of St. Avold and had seen nothing of the enemy, and that the whole of their forces appeared to have gone to Forbach.”—He had not been there, however, so how did he know?—Where did he obtain his information, and what was its real value?—Information must be explicit.—One of the most difficult tasks for the higher command is to elicit the truth from the different reports which often not only appear to be, but are, contradictory.\*—Patrols, therefore, must send in their information in an absolutely accurate and precise form.†

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things in other parts of the field are not going on as they should. It may give rise to a hundred foreboding speculations ; whereas the man who gallops up, no matter how quickly, with a smiling face, . . . spreads abroad a feeling of security and success . . . making all feel they are on the winning side.”—WOLSELEY : *Soldier's Pocket-Book*.

\* Without accurate, and with, what was worse, misleading information, the French Marshals and Generals were bewildered by every strong patrol which marched up to and even looked into their camps ; thus out of mere scouting parties their imagination constructed whole Corps ready to pounce upon them.—HOOPER : *Sedan*.

† “It has been asked by De Brack : ‘Is it permissible in reports to mention facts which have not been actually verified?’ What is the answer he himself gives? A report should be divided into two parts—one official, the other non-official—both of which must be entirely separated. It is inadmissible, for instance, to

To find out whether the main body of the French rear-guard, which had been at Châteaudun, had crossed the Loire at Beaugency, an officer's patrol of the Zieten Hussars, consisting of ten men, received an order to ride from Langey via Clayes towards Beaugency.—The officer was simultaneously informed that the Bavarians in the course of the day intended to attack Châteaudun, and that the enemy on being driven out would probably fall back on Beaugency.

Starting at 8 a.m., they rode in close order as far as the outposts in observation towards Clayes. Up to this time every patrol had been fired upon from that particular town.—The officer decided to deceive his opponents.—He therefore placed his men in a formation to give them the appearance of an advanced guard of a far larger body.—With this end in view he sent on a point far in advance, placing flank patrols to the right and left, and every now and then despatching a few men to the rear, so

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report, 'I arrived at Loevenstein. The enemy was seen in the village this morning, and retired towards Greiffenstein.'—(This reads curiously like Lieut. Stumm's report.)—On the other hand, it is perfectly correct to say, 'I arrived at Loevenstein at 9.30 p.m., and found no signs of the enemy. The Burgomaster told me, and several of the inhabitants affirm, that,' etc. 'Later information leads me to surmise that the enemy left the road,' etc."—CAPITAINE LOIR : *Cavalerie*.

"In spite of the often-repeated and terrible lessons we have been taught, it seems that a common belief is still maintained that it is impossible to reconnoitre without fighting. Not only is this principle entirely wrong, but it entails the most serious consequences."—DE BRACK : *Light Cavalry Outposts*.

as to give an appearance of sending back information. The ruse was successful. Before the Reservists and sharpshooters had realized their intention, the patrol had passed through the town and crossed the railway embankment.—It then trotted along the high road to Ouzouer without coming upon anything to arouse suspicion in the intervening villages. — Further on two men were noticed coming out of a wood on to the road. As soon as they saw the patrol they disappeared, only to reappear accompanied by forty mobiles, who marched upon Ouzouer.—The road in this direction was thus blocked.

The patrol then tried to cross the brook in the neighbourhood of a castle, further to the north.—In the park they came upon a waggon driven by a reservist anxious to desert.—He told them there were three thousand French troops bivouacked at Binas.—Two other reservists captured soon after gave similar information.—The three men were placed together in the waggon, under an escort of three hussars, and sent back to the regiment.—The remainder of the patrol, continuing their march, reached the road to Binas and Beaugency, and passed through two more villages without making any further discovery. On leaving the furthestmost, they saw a train of about two hundred waggons marching from Châteaudun to Binas under an escort of infantry.

The patrol managed to get within about two hundred yards of them, but was at once spotted, and greeted with rapid fire.—As there were no out-

posts visible, the existence of a French camp at Binas appeared doubtful.—When the patrol endeavoured, however, to ride round the further end of the village, a line of skirmishers was noticed advancing from a farm they had only just passed. Alarmed by the shots, the whole place was alive in a moment.—Sentry after sentry appeared, while countless pickets doubled up from the rear so as to intercept their quarry.—There was nothing for the patrol to do but dash off through one of the gaps, and trust to its heels for safety.—The rapid fire by which they were followed fortunately had no effect.

French sentries were now visible in every direction, while to the right, as far as the forest of Marchenoir, and to the left, on the road to Châteaudun, as far as eye could reach, a train of waggons and small bodies of infantry could be clearly made out upon the march.—This all pointed to the existence of a considerable French camp at Binas.—It was not long before a considerable train of waggons came into sight.—They were at once attacked by the patrol.—Its solitary escort was a mounted gendarme, who immediately galloped off.—The waggons were laden with sugar and provisions, which unfortunately could not be carried off.—All this took place close to a village, where the enemy shortly afterwards appeared.—The patrol, however, had hardly regained open country when it found itself under fire from the village at a range of 300 yards.—It was forced to gallop on for about a quarter of a mile, but



it suffered no loss.—It had now come back to the castle it had previously passed.—It found the whole park barricaded.—It cleared the obstacles, however, and arrived at the furthestmost village before reaching Claves.—Here it found the three hussars who had been sent back, but having been fired upon and pursued near Claves, they had abandoned both waggon and prisoners.—The whole patrol now rode on, and tried to make their way through Claves.—The enemy, however, were too much on the alert, and were on their guard.—The only alternative for the patrol, therefore, was to fight its way to Châteaudun, in the hope that the Bavarians might have taken it in the interval.—At one spot, as they were riding through a clearing in a wood, a number of sharpshooters appeared suddenly from the cover in rear.—The patrol galloped off at its utmost speed, and managed to get away without loss in spite of the countless stumps.

Fronting Châteaudun they came upon the Bavarian cavalry, and were able to report to General von der Tann that the enemy was everywhere retiring upon Orleans.—The horses had travelled something like sixty-five miles.—ARDENNE: *Geschichte des Zieten'schen Husaren Regiments*.



## APPENDIX II

THE functions of cavalry fall necessarily under one or other of the following principal categories—reconnaissance, protection, attacking communications, or taking part in actual battle.

It is difficult to over-estimate the admirable use which the Germans made of their cavalry to conceal their movements, to harass the enemy. and, above all, to obtain priceless information, while the adversary, whose mounted arm was idle, could acquire none.—The one solitary instance of alertness shown by the French was the dash made by Margueritte to relieve Pont à Mousson, and even he and his troopers were withdrawn, not only leaving the river line above Metz wholly unprotected, but the bridges undestroyed.—HOOPER : *Sedan*.

### CHARGES.

#### *Necessity to Reconnoitre the Ground.*

The cavalry during their charge at Vionville had ridden almost up to the Prussian troops without suffering any appreciable loss, when it suddenly found itself thrown into complete disorder by a number of obstacles littering the ground—baggage waggons, biscuit cases, and camp equipment — abandoned

by the French in the hurry of their retreat. During the charge the regiment of cuirassiers lost 22 officers, 208 men, and 243 horses.—This slaughter would never have occurred, however, had the guns remained somewhat longer in action.—It must always be laid down as a maxim that reconnoitring the ground is indispensable.—Had it been ascertained beforehand that the ground was strewn with obstacles, the cuirassiers would have charged from another direction. — BOUIE : *La Cavalerie Française*.

At Königgrätz, in their eagerness to meet the enemy at the earliest possible moment, the 4th Hussars omitted to throw out ground scouts to their front.—When they were already at full gallop they unexpectedly came upon a deep water-course which had been concealed from view by the high corn.—A few were just able to pull up in time, others managed to get over to the other side, but the greater number fell over into the gully.—*Campaign of 1866 in Germany. Official account.*

At Talavera, Sir Arthur Wellesley immediately ordered Anson's Brigade of Cavalry, composed of the 23rd Light Dragoons and 1st German Hussars, to charge the head of the columns.—These regiments, coming on at a canter, and increasing the speed as they advanced, rode headlong against the enemy; but in a few moments came upon the brink of a hollow cleft, which was not perceptible at a distance.

The French, throwing themselves into squares, opened fire :—Colonel Arenschilde, commanding

the Hussars—an officer whose forty years' experience had made a master of his art—promptly reined up at the brink, exclaiming in his broken phrase, “I will not kill my young mens.”—NAPIER : *History of the War in the Peninsula*.

At the Battle of Rezonville, General Voigt-Rhetz was on the main road near Mars-la-Tour, and had seen the rout of the 38th Brigade of the 19th (German) Division. He continued to watch for a few moments, then exclaimed : “The cavalry must charge at all costs !” \*—General Brandenburg, who was standing near, replied that a cavalry charge would be unavailing.—“I dare say the regiment won't be successful,” retorted General Voigt-Rhetz, “but if it compels the enemy to halt for ten minutes and gets killed to the last man, it will have fulfilled its mission.”

Colonel Auerswald, commanding the 1st Dra-

\* At the Battle of Zorndorff, when the Prussian first line had been thrown back in disorder by the Russians, Frederick II. sent order after order to Seydlitz to charge with his sixty squadrons.—The latter refused to move, and waited quietly for the Russians to cross the ground of his own choosing.—Frederick sent him a final message that “after the battle he should answer with his head for his insubordination.” — “After the battle my head is at the King's disposal,” replied Seydlitz, who still waited, and at the psychological moment gave the order for the charge which overwhelmed the Russians.—That evening Frederick II., having embraced him, is said to have exclaimed : “Yet another victory which I owe to you !”—Tradition states that the yet famous Z<sup>u</sup>then, while keeping his squadrons concealed, was in the habit of watching the enemy alone, and that he used to give the signal for the attack by throwing his pipe into the air.—TRANSLATOR.

goons, on receiving the order, made no comment, but having carefully taken in the lie of the land, at once decided upon his plan of action, and to such good purpose did he take advantage of the ground that the dragoons reached the nearest companies without even having been fired upon. They charged straight ahead, and at once found themselves in the midst of the French battalions which were assembling after the attack.—The dragoons were annihilated and their Colonel killed, but his mission had been accomplished.—TRANSLATOR.

For a cavalry charge to be successful against infantry one at least of the three following conditions must be fulfilled :

(1) The infantry must be shaken and thrown off its balance either by the fatigues and emotions of the fight, or by the fire of the hostile rifles\* and artillery ; or

(2) There must be a surprise ; or

(3) Successive and repeated efforts of the mounted arm must pierce the enemy's line which must have been charged along its entire front, so that no portion of it can concentrate its fire in support of its most threatened section.

Charges made regardless of these conditions have never been successful, not even during the First Empire.—LOIR : *Cavalerie*.

\* "What it is the fashion to miscall cavalry spirit is antagonistic to the idea of fighting on foot, which has now become essential."  
—DE NÉGRIER : *Russo-Japanese War*.

*Charges against Artillery and Infantry.*

*Charges and Formations.* — At Salamanca a front had been spread on the southern heights; but it was loose and unfit to resist, for the troops were, some in double lines, some in columns, some in squares. A powerful sun shone full in their eyes; the light soil, stirred up by the trampling of men and horses, and driven forward by the breeze, which arose in the west at the moment of attack, came full upon them, mingled with smoke in such stifling clouds that, scarcely able to breathe and quite unable to see, their fire was directed at random.

In this situation the interval between the two attacks was suddenly filled with a whirling cloud of dust. . . . As it passed the left of the 3rd Division, Le Marchant's heavy horsemen, flanked by Anson's light cavalry, broke forth from it at full speed; and the next instant 1,200 French infantry, though formed in several lines, were trampled down with a terrible clamour and disturbance. Bewildered and blinded, they cast away their arms and ran through the openings of the British squadrons, stooping and demanding quarter, while the dragoons, big men on big horses, rode onward, smiting with their long glittering swords in uncontrollable power.—The French left was entirely broken, more than 2,000 prisoners were taken; the French light horsemen abandoned that part of the field, and Thomiere's division no longer existed

as a military body.—NAPIER: *History of the War in the Peninsula*.

The Union Brigade was posted on the left of the Brussels road (at Waterloo) in support of <sup>Piston's</sup> ~~Piedan's~~ division; and when d'Erlon attacked the latter, it was brought forward through the intervals of the infantry to charge the French columns.

The Royals on the right charged and broke one of the columns. . . . The Inniskillings, in the centre, advanced farther so as to charge two columns which were moving up in support of the others, and similarly overthrew them.

The Greys, on advancing, found in their direct front the head of a French column establishing itself on the Havre road. Passing through the intervals of the infantry, it at once charged and dispersed it.

The brigade, after overthrowing the French infantry, lost nearly all regularity and galloped madly up to the French position, notwithstanding all the efforts of the officers to prevent it, and began sabring the gunners and stabbing the horses of the enemy's batteries.—But they were now attacked by a body of French lancers, and their horses being blown and exhausted, they suffered severely in their confused retreat to the British position.—SIBBORNE: *Waterloo Letters*.

### *Battle of Rezonville. Bredow's Charge.*

“Vionville had to be held at all costs,” wrote General Alvensleben at a later date.—“It had become necessary to gain time for the 5th Infantry



Division.—To do this the attack had to be renewed so as to prevent the French from realizing their numerical superiority.

“To have lost our ascendance would have been, as regards the issue of the day, an imprudence compared to which all other risks would have sunk into insignificance.—I determined, therefore, to forestall the enemy by a cavalry attack, as the infantry, which was exhausted and had already suffered severely, was no longer capable of doing so.—As I gave instructions to Colonel Voigt-Rhetz (chief of the staff, 3rd German Army Corps) to send the necessary orders to Bredow’s Brigade, which was close at hand and in a good position to carry out my intention, . . . Colonel Von Drigalski (commanding 2nd Dragoons), who had remained motionless in front of his regiment, and whose attention had been arrested by the order given to Colonel Voigt-Rhetz, looked towards me.—I understood his meaning; but repressing the impulse to give the permission he was hoping for, I ordered him to retain his regiment in reserve.”

Colonel Voigt-Rhetz at once rode to General von Bredow with instructions to charge the enemy’s guns close to the Roman road.

He added—and the merit is all his own—that the brigade was to leave our batteries on its right and advance along the skirts of the wood against the enemy’s left.—He also showed the General the most suitable line of advance.—To the question, “Are we to attack the woods?” the Colonel replied that they were held by our infantry.—These woods

caused Bredow considerable anxiety, and he wasted some time in drawing lots to decide which of two squadrons should cover his left towards the northern salient of the Tronville plantation.—This detachment was useless, and did absolutely nothing.\*

Colonel Voigt-Rhetz had already ridden away some distance before he became aware of the delay. He galloped back to impress upon the General there was no time to spare.—General von Bredow then sent for his two Colonels, and in a few words gave them their instructions, adding that no delay must be made in taking prisoners or trophies, and that they were to gallop through every obstacle. Having received orders to move off, the Brigade advanced in line of masses (7th Cuirassiers to the left, 16th Uhlans to the right) at deploying intervals, and crossed the road in rear of the batteries.—It then moved rapidly to the crest on their left, and was soon lost to sight in the valley which runs due north from Vionville.

Here the General ordered “Troops, left wheel,” so as to gain ground to the north and reach his intended line of attack.—The march of approach, with the exception of the brief interval occupied crossing the ridge (287), was made completely under cover.—When the brigade had ridden rather over half a mile along the valley, and was no longer masked by the infantry lines, the General ordered “Troops, right wheel,” thus moving his

\* “Generals who are in the habit of holding back fresh troops for the day after the battle are almost always beaten.”—  
NAPOLÉON.

regiments up the slope in the direction of the enemy.—Owing to the rolling nature of the ground, the brigade was still under cover both on its line of advance and on its left flank.—As the regiments reached the higher ground, the General gave the order first to deploy, then to form into lines of columns, and afterwards into line.—These changes of formation were all carried out under cover. The order to gallop was then given.

The 7th Cuirassiers dropped two troops in rear, to act as a defensive flank.

The 16th Uhlans, who had lost a little time in wheeling to the right as well as in deploying, were somewhat in rear of the Cuirassiers.

The advance at the gallop was being carried out in excellent order over slightly undulating ground, when a few shots fired from the woods emptied some of the saddles of the 7th.—As none of the enemy were in sight, Major von Dollen—commanding the 16th,—called out: “This is all very well, but I can’t see the enemy we are supposed to attack.”—At that very moment groups of infantry (three companies of the 9th Chasseurs), and some batteries of artillery, suddenly appeared 3,000 or 4,000 yards ahead of the Uhlans.—Shouting “Marsch! Marsch!” the whole line flung itself forward at the charge.—The Uhlans pitched right upon the infantry, whose fire was incapable of stopping them, while the squadron to the left made for one of the batteries.

The Cuirassiers, longer concealed by the ground to their immediate front, came upon two batteries

unlimbering.—The gunners had only time to fire two shots of case before the batteries were galloped down.

These encounters, coming on the top of the loss already sustained, broke up the squadrons, and the brigade, carried away by the horses, was in the wildest disorder.—The Prussian cavalry, with limbers and loose horses, fell pell-mell upon the 93rd infantry regiment.—The infantry was ridden down, and the second battalion thrown into complete confusion. The charge was now continued by groups, the men continuing to gallop forward, sabring all they met, till they finally reached the slopes north of Rezonville.—Directly following upon this charge, which had already covered more than a mile, a huge swarm of French horsemen suddenly appeared from every direction.—Immediately he caught sight of the hostile squadrons, General von Bredow did his utmost to sound the rally—in vain—his bugler had had his instrument pierced by a bullet.

Pressed by the oncoming avalanche, the Prussians turned about, and in a few moments a galloping mass of German and French horse, all mixed up together, sped down the road towards Vionville. Fortunately the main French force did not long press the pursuit.—The piercing notes of the rally were heard even in that wild excitement, and they halted on the extreme edge of the tableland.—Of one regiment of the Bredow Brigade, only one squadron could afterwards be formed ; their losses were :—

In the three squadrons of Cuirassiers (370 sabres)

9 officers and 192 men ; and in the three squadrons of Uhlans (370 sabres) 9 officers and 220 men.

“ No one can have felt our losses more keenly than I,” commented General Alvensleben,—“ but our courage had been whetted, and the enemy were not merely conscious of it, but made to feel it.”—Breathing-time, moreover, had been gained for the infantry north-east of Vionville, where, thanks to the charge, it was able to win a few hundred yards in the direction of the Roman road and thus occupy a more favourable position on the slope which had been so long in dispute.—On the other hand, the French artillery and infantry between the main road and the wood south of Villers-sur-Bois, had been thrown into such dire confusion that the order of battle could only be re-established by degrees.—For a considerable time their guns were altogether silenced.—COLONEL BOURDERIAT.

Not a needle-gun was fired as these splendid horsemen, with a change of front, rushed down the treacherous slope with the velocity of an avalanche.—I have seen other cavalry charges, but never anything so heroic as that of those splendid Chasseurs d’Afrique.—The troopers and the foot soldiers could have distinguished the colour of each other’s hair . . . when suddenly along the ranks of the infantry there flashed out a simultaneous streak of fire . . . a white cloud of smoke was gently wafted towards the Chasseurs. . . . As it rolled away, our gaze was arrested by a line of brilliantly coloured uniforms and grey horses which gradually became visible—



## 320 CAVALRY TACTICAL SCHEMES

some still prostrate and struggling between the potato-ridges, others already lying still in death.—“*Contemporary Report.*”

The charge took place over extremely treacherous ground, and even before they could attack their ranks were broken by the heavy flanking fire of the Prussian batteries. . . . One portion of the German infantry on the hill-side was lying under cover, others in groups of varying strength were fully exposed.—At several points their foremost lines were broken by the French, and a detachment of these valiant troops forced their way past eight of our guns through a fierce fire, but the reserves beyond checked their further progress . . . and the volleys of the infantry fired at a short range caused the whole field to be strewn with dead and wounded.\*—MOLTKE: *The Franco-German War.*

\* “‘You have come just in time,’ said the Captain of the leading company.—‘Marshal Oyama has ordered us to carry the Russian position before night, so as to facilitate the enveloping movement of the first army.—The general attack will take place immediately.’

“Comfortably installed behind some big boulders, we turn our field-glasses on to the plain.—All at once, on the far side of a distant slope, a thin khaki line makes its appearance.—It is the Japanese infantry, who have set their knapsacks on the ground and are beginning the attack.—For this special assault the firing-line has been broken up into sections of from twelve to twenty men under an officer or N.C.O.—To each of these sections the officers have assigned the particular point in the enemy’s position which they have to make for. No further indication of a command will be given.—The first line rush out of the trenches. The section leaders dash forward to the front, running with all their might as far as the nearest depression. The men follow



The suffocating heat, during a forced march of nearly twenty miles, supplemented by an exhaust-

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without attempting to keep order, their only thought being to arrive quickest at the spot where they can lie down. I keep my glasses fixed upon one section. First it crosses a millet plantation undetected by the enemy; then, when I again catch sight of it, it is emerging from the dhurra into a bean-field.—The khaki specks hurry forward; one man falls, picks himself up again, stumbles on a few steps farther, then falls again, never more to rise.—Two more writhe down upon the ground.—A fourth strives in vain to regain the cover he and his party have just quitted; he rolls over by the side of his three wounded comrades.

“Meanwhile, in front of the whole Russian position it is possible to make out the khaki swarms drawing nearer and ever nearer by successive rushes.—The men follow the leaders; the leaders choose the shelter ahead and pick out the best way to reach it.—Often one section will diverge to the right or left out of its direct line to take advantage of better cover, and follow the same way as the section next them, afterwards returning to their own original direction.—After the first halt the even line of the start is broken.—The different sections are seen scattered over the slope, some lying down, some creeping, others running at the top of their speed.—The thousand yards or more to be crossed before reaching the Russian accessory defences are covered in this manner.

“As soon as the first line has got half-way to its objective, the second line, in turn, quits the trenches in which it has remained sheltered and rushes out on to the glaciais, like the first, making similar use of ground and cover and somehow getting forward.—The third follows the second, and so on throughout.—Six columns in succession reach the hill-side, now strewn with dead and wounded, and one after another protect themselves behind the bank of earth less than 110 yards from the enemy’s trenches.—All this time volunteers are busy cutting the barbed wires under the very muzzles of the Russian rifles.—As they crawl along the ground they open gangways through the

ing attack, had completely drained our strength. I noticed vigorous soldiers dropping to the ground. The expression of these unhappy men who had suffered such bitter disillusion seemed to vary with their character.—I saw some of them weeping like children ; others threw themselves upon the ground without a murmur, but in the majority of cases the dominating and all-absorbing thought was thirst.—It was Nature asserting herself.—Water! Water! was the piteous and one and only cry I heard those grim spectres utter.—The enemy was still firing—the advance was slow, and only continued with heads bowed down with anguish. . . . The utmost limit of human endurance had been already passed—the men were no longer physically

entanglements ; but few indeed of these daring heroes rejoin their comrades.—The company moving at my side shoot as fast as they can, and the Russians in like manner increase the intensity of their fire.—All around us men are falling.—But the whistling of the bullets, the crackling of the rifles, and the more distant booming of the big guns all fall upon deaf ears.

“ Rising to obtain a better view, our eyes can see nothing but the desperate fight now raging less than half a mile away.—Suddenly the whole Japanese line is lit up by the glitter of steel flashing from the scabbard.—It is the last phase—the assault.—Once again the officers quit shelter, with ringing cries of ‘ Banzai ! ’ wildly echoed by all the rank and file.—Slowly, but not to be denied, they make headway, in spite of the barbed wire, mines and pitfalls, and the merciless hail of bullets. Whole units are destroyed—others take their places ; the advancing wave pauses for a moment, but sweeps ever onward.—Already they are within a few yards of the trenches. Then, on the Russian side, the long grey line of Siberian Fusiliers forms up in turn and delivers one last volley before scurrying at the double down the far side of the hill.”—DE NÉGRIER : *Russo-Japanese War*.

capable of making any further effort.—No sentiment, base or noble, could have revived them. They could no longer recognize either officers or friends.—Had a few hostile squadrons come suddenly upon them not a soul could possibly have escaped.—F<sup>r</sup>ITZ-HOENIG : *Two Brigades*.

Unimpaired as our faith may be in the endurance of our infantry,\* I am convinced that even the Guard could not have stood against the overwhelming and well-directed charge of Du Barail's cavalry division.—F<sup>r</sup>ITZ-HOENIG.

Lines of skirmishers, melting away under fire as they extend themselves upon a broader front, are being broken up and scattered in their attempt to outflank the enemy.—Men whose strength has become exhausted by hurried movements through thickets and high corn—by climbing hills after an arduous march with breathless haste—or by a dash across country in dense columns:—when ammunition has become scarce, and large numbers

\* “If infantry, by disregard of death, can come to close quarters in spite of the enemy's fire, why should not cavalry, with its immense superiority in speed, be able to do the same?”  
—SKOBELOF.

“... The extraordinary energy—physical, moral, and intellectual—of the Japanese has justly challenged the amazement of the world. It was, indeed, an impressive object-lesson in the overwhelming influence exercised by moral forces—an unconquerable self-reliance, a devoted patriotism, and a chivalrous disregard of death. It is now universally recognized that the individual courage of the soldier has never shown itself more predominantly than in his use of the deadly weapons which have been placed in his hands by modern science.”—DE NÉGRIER : *Russo-Japanese War*.

of officers have fallen;—when all control has virtually ceased to exist; . . . the terrible thought must have occurred to the minds of many . . . What if an unflinching body of cavalry were to take us now in flank and sweep across the field of battle?—It could destroy the remainder of our soldiers with the greatest ease. On the evening of Vionville,† when the shades of darkness had at last begun to fall upon that vast field of carnage, and scarcely a foot soldier appeared to be alive, when a mighty mass of artillery, comprising a hundred guns, stood defenceless in its midst, it is impossible that similar reflections should

\* “ ‘When met among comrades death loses its pain,’ says a Russian proverb.—In the French Army the moment the fatal cry ‘Sauve-qui-peut’ is raised, the sense of self-preservation unbinds all military bonds, and anguish with all its fiendish sway begins to reign. On the other hand, the mental attitude of the Russian soldier is that of stolid resignation.—With the former this despairing note throws everything into disorder and confusion; with the latter terror begets a rigidity of formation which not merely forbids the shame of flight, but actually prevents the relaxation of discipline.”—WACHS: *Armed Strength of Russia*.

† “Well mounted, well equipped, and capitally led, the cuirassiers (of the French Guard at Vionville) not only charged in excellent order and precision, but with the greatest possible courage.—Under our well-aimed fire, however, their splendid horses fell in masses, while the centre of the line, which went straight for the infantry, was annihilated.—Then as the two wings swung outwards from each other they came in turn under the fire of the infantry as they passed them to run the gauntlet of the skirmishers and supports.—In a few minutes nothing remained of this magnificent regiment but a few scattered troopers, who had barely succeeded in cutting down a single soldier.”—KRAFT: *Cavalry*.

not have flitted across the minds of the survivors.  
—GOLTZ : *Das Volk in Waffen*.

I am not to be tempted into a mathematical calculation as to how many mounted men can be shot down by a single battalion in a given number of minutes, or as to how much higher the velocity of a bullet may be than that of a horse.—Every battlefield still demonstrates to-day, quite as clearly as those of yesterday, the inexorable law of stubborn resistance:—whether due to disorder with its own consequent sequence of tactical errors—to a lack of vigilance—or to the fact that the infantry power may have sunk below its normal level in consequence of the physical and moral wear and tear of a long-continued fire action:—that confusion is always most noticeable at the decisive points.—Cavalry, therefore, should be particularly directed to such places in readiness to dash forward the instant the enemy gives way.—In moments of crisis such as these it is altogether a matter of indifference whether the retreating force carries a repeating rifle, a blunderbuss, or a pitchfork, the nerves of the men being overwrought, their weapons count for nothing.—HOENIG.

*Cavalry versus Cavalry. Formations.*

Taken in flank by our cavalry, the enemy's squadrons were so exhausted that they were unable to get anything more out of their horses.—They were thus entirely at the mercy of our men, who cut them down like sheep.—This attack proves the absolute necessity of a reserve, which, following the move-



ments of the main onslaught without strain, will arrive untired and eager to complete success or victory, and profit by the exhaustion of the enemy. The echelons of Bredow's Brigade obtained an initial success, but were unable to maintain it:—having no supports, they were at our mercy. **BONAPARTE**: *Cavalerie en Compagnie*.

Colonel von Caprivi, who was at the hill cemetery of Flavigny, was a witness of the charge of the French cavalry.—He sent back word to General Redern (commanding the 11th and 17th Hussars); and called out himself to the Colonel of the 17th: “The enemy's cavalry is charging:—Forward!”—The 17th immediately started off without waiting for the General's orders and without any definite plan of action.—After passing through the German infantry it deployed, but encountered nothing but dead horses and dismounted Cuirassiers.—It reached the neighbourhood of Rezonville in the greatest confusion, having accomplished nothing.—In this predicament Colonel **RANCH** (in command of the regiment), noticing a French battery beginning to unlimber, attempted to attack it, but was unable to rally more than one out of his three squadrons.—The two others were forced, under heavy infantry fire, to turn about.

General Redern's horse was killed, and the 11th Hussars galloped onwards up the ravine.—One squadron, under Captain Buerst, separated from the regiment to charge the battery against which Colonel Ranch was striving to rally his men.



—Marshal Bazaine was personally directing the placing of this battery in position.—He was swept away in a wild stampede by the startled gun-teams; but the Marshal's escort of two squadrons charged what remained of the Redern Brigade, and pursued them as far as the first lines of the German infantry.—Whatever advantage resulted from this charge was achieved by a couple of squadrons.—These did contrive to penetrate to the heart of the French position, and all but captured the newly appointed Commander-in-Chief.—LANGLOIS,—1870.

As regards the formation for the march of approach,—squadrons must be able to deploy with the utmost rapidity.—The best formation, therefore, is that of “line of troop columns,”\*—the Squadron Leaders being permitted to vary the interval as may be found advisable.—This formation has the advantage of allowing Squadron Leaders to keep their unit in hand up to the last moment even at the hardest pace.

\* “The formation to be adopted during the advances will usually depend on the facilities for concealment offered by the ground and the effect of the enemy's fire. Against direct artillery fire small shallow columns, each on a narrow ground, such as troop columns, are less vulnerable. These columns should be on an irregular front, so that the range from the enemy's guns to each column is different. The intervals between such columns should not normally be less than 50 yards, and the distance between each should be greater than that covered by the bullets of a shrapnel—that is to say, it should be over 200 yards. Small columns are also less vulnerable to long-range infantry fire. . . .”—*Cavalry Training*, p. 289.

Squadrons will be formed in lines or in column according to circumstances, and deployment will be carried out either in single rank or in extended order.\*

The latter formation will be adopted when it is desired to fix the enemy's attention in one particular direction, and to attack him from another. It also allows the enemy to be attacked all along his front, while the economy in strength benefits the main attack which calls for the utmost cohesion.

From the point of view of moral, as well as material effect, compared with the double formation, a charge in single rank is equally impressive and efficacious against infantry, while it is only half as vulnerable.—It further admits of men being taken from the attacking line to form a more powerful reserve.—For this reason, when attacking infantry, a single line formation will usually be adopted.—*LOIR: Cavalerie.*

Echelons in rear must support the leading line very closely: (1) in order to prevent the first line being overwhelmed before the succeeding lines become engaged; and (2) to increase the vehemence of the charge by the confidence inspired by the proximity of the supporting troops.—*Cavalry Training*, p. 297.

An attacking line of cavalry deployed need not be concerned about its flanks.—Its duty is to

\* The Squadron Leader regulates the employment and co-operation of the several troops, and exercises constant care in maintaining communication with his immediate commander.

charge with vigour to the front; it will be in the midst of the enemy before any flanking movement can take effect.—The task either of making or warding off flank attacks will be undertaken by the echelons in rear.—BONNAL.

All other things being equal, frontal attacks generally result in those undecided cavalry duels which are so prone to degenerate into a scrimmage on a large scale.—In cavalry combats it is by flank attacks alone that decisive results can be obtained.—V. DU VERNOIS.

So desirable is it that there should be a reserve in all cases in which cavalry is required to charge, that this appears to be a matter of necessity. . . .—WELLINGTON.

Efficient cavalries have at all times favoured a strong first line, a fast pace, a broad rather than deep formation, and long lines with short intervals between.

If the shock of the first line has been ineffective, or has missed its objective, then we can no longer expect to win a victory, but must content ourselves with avoiding defeat.—If, however, the first line is strong, turned in the right direction, and adequately supported in good time, then all will be well.—HOENIG.

Ten men on the flank can do more than a hundred against a front.—VON SCHMIDT.

When about to charge make a change of front and attack in flank.—This manœuvre will always be successful against an enemy like the English, whose horses are not too well trained, and whose men,

brave but inadequately taught, begin their strenuous charge without co-ordination at too great a distance from the enemy.—DE BRACK.

Balaclava. Charge of the Light Brigade: "It is magnificent, but it is not war."—MARSHAL CANROBERT.

After the lessons of the recent war, at the present moment the urgent question is how to convert our cavalry from its inveterate faith in the traditional evolutions and obsolete shock-tactics of the last century, while at the same time insisting upon its officers devoting more attention to the study of contemporary warfare.—Assuredly it will not abandon without regret the ancient paths to glory in which its former laurels have been won. No less certainly these out-of-date methods to-day can only lead to useless and wanton sacrifice of human life.—DE NÉGRIER.

## APPENDIX III

### DIVISIONAL CAVALRY

THE work already imposed upon divisional cavalry is so onerous that, if it is to be increased, it will become incapable of further effort.

It is impossible for this to be otherwise when, as often happens, an unfortunate squadron is parcelled out between the three Generals, four Colonels, and sixteen battalion commanders, as well as the staff officers.—The Leader thus finds himself left alone with his Squadron Sergeant-Major, to whom he is permitted to pour out his tribulations just out of earshot of the Divisional Commander.—DONOP: *Lettres d'un Vieux Cavalier*.

To-day in the French Army these duties will be undertaken by mounted infantry scouts working from 500 to 900 yards ahead upon the flanks of the infantry column.—A proportion of these scouts are to be allotted to each battalion.—They will be drawn from the ranks of the reservists, who are at present in excess of the cavalry establishment, and they are to be mounted on requisitioned horses.—TRANSLATOR.

On August 9, 1870, the advanced guard of the Third German Army Corps reached Longueville at midday. . . . The French have retired to the

west of the French Nied.—The brigade of corps cavalry have spent the night at Fauligny; its patrols are on the French Nied.—To-morrow the 6th Division is to resume its march upon Metz. . . . Where could the guns best open fire upon the advancing column?

. . . The column is obliged to traverse three distinct zones :

- (1) Before reaching the French Nied.
- (2) Between the two Nied rivers.
- (3) West of the French Nied.

In the first zone . . . artillery could only intervene by taking up a position north or south of the road.—To the north, on the heights of Sainte Suzanne and Brouck; to the south, at point 403, to the south-west of Bambiderstroff, and at point 399, to the east of Maranges.

Should the patrol wait till the column is within range of the guns before reaching their several positions, it will still travel faster than the despatch rider carrying the information back; the column will be surprised, and the mission of the divisional squadron will have miscarried.—It is necessary, therefore, to push on further ahead, and advance as far as Narbéfontaine and Brouck; there to extend the necessary protective screen, and get into touch with the detachment at Boucheperu.—Watch, south of the road, will be kept in a similar manner in the directions of Flétrange and Guinglange, both of which give access to points 403 and 399, already mentioned as possible sources of danger.—The



detachments in this direction will endeavour to gain contact with the protective troops at Faulguemont.

In crossing the second zone the road ascends the slope of the Ré woods.—To the north the flank is covered by the two Niefs and the forest of Varize.—To the south, on the contrary, the barren uplands of Servigny-les-Raville and Maizeroy offer numerous positions for artillery; they are therefore a menace to the column.

The last part of the march will be regulated in a similar manner.

At 6 a.m., when the head of the column reaches the tavern at Longueville . . . the divisional squadrons should be disposed as follows :

1. One troop (with an officer), marching upon Foligny, parallel with Maranges, should have orders to hold the former place after its evacuation by the brigade of corps cavalry (with which it will get into touch).—There it will await the arrival of the main body of the squadron by which it is being followed.

2. An officer (with eight men, a Sergeant, and a Corporal) has just passed Zimmering, and is moving upon Narbéfontaine.—He should have orders to watch the junction of the roads and cover the right flank of the column as it passes through the defile between Zimmering and Maranges, and also to gain contact with the detachment at Boucheperu.—He should remain in observation till 9.30, and then, marching via Bannay, rejoin the squadron on the main road between Bionville and Courcelles-

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Chaussy.—These orders require some amplification :—

(a) . . . Specific objectives and fixed hours should be given out in a similar manner to that usually adopted for protective detachments.

(b) This is a strong patrol, including as it does an Officer, a Sergeant, and a Corporal.—It means that the country, to be properly watched, requires searching, for there is a considerable area of dead ground which could not be kept under observation by one man alone.—We are not dealing here with a narrow defile which could be watched by a single vedette. On the contrary, as it is necessary to keep an eye both upon the tavern Des Quatre Vents and point 367, south of Halling, numerous feelers will have to be sent out from some central point.—In this case the patrol is in reality a small protective detachment.

(c) The time when the mission of this patrol will terminate can be calculated as follows: Supposing that the division takes three hours to pass a given point,—its head will be between Zimmering and Maranges at 7 a.m.; the hindmost troops will pass the same point at 10 a.m.—The enemy will arrive upon the heights of Sainte Suzanne (a position of danger for the column) too late.—Unless reported, therefore, within a mile to the north by 9.30, the mission of the detachment will be finished by that hour.—All cavalry officers should be able to work out such minor problems without hesitation.

3. A Corporal and four men have already been at point 405 for more than a quarter of an hour;

they are watching towards the south and south-west, that is, in the directions of Flétrange and Elvange.—They will remain in observation till 9 a.m., when they will rejoin the squadron between Bionville and Courcelles-Chaussy, marching via Guinglange and the left bank of the Nied. . . .

These different detachments are equal, more or less, to two troops, including officers.

The main body of the squadron (two troops) will march at about five miles an hour.—At 6 a.m. it will be to the south of Zimmering, a mile and a half ahead of the infantry.

When crossing Maranges at about 6.30 a.m., it will detach a fresh patrol towards Brouck—(one N.C.O. and six men), with similar orders to those given to the officer's patrol sent to Narbéfontaine. This will complete the protection on the right flank of the column.

The remainder of the squadron should reach Fauligny towards 7 a.m.—that is, about an hour ahead of the infantry, for which it will only have to wait in order to regain contact.

During this halt the western exit from Fauligny will be held by a troop: this will suffice to safeguard the road.—The squadron will ascend the slopes north of Fauligny and take cover.—If attacked it will be prepared to seize the Brouck woods, and hold them till the arrival of the advanced guard. Vedettes will be sent out towards l'Arbre de Brouck and Bionville.

The Squadron Leader meanwhile will prepare for the second bound, so that when the infantry reaches

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F<sup>o</sup>auligny at 8 a.m., on the left bank of the Nied all the posts will be already out, and the requisite observations made.

With this object in view, therefore about 7.20 a.m. he will send out—

(1) A Corporal with four men to the south of Guinglange to watch in the direction of Elvange and Hermilly;—they will remain in observation till 10.30, when they will rejoin towards Pont-à-Chaussy.—

(2) One officer with ten men towards Frécourt, with orders to watch in the directions of Aoury, Villers-Stoncourt, Berlize, and cover the left flank of the column between Bionville and Courcelles-Chaussy.—They will gain contact with the detachment at the bridge at Domangeville (corps cavalry).—

(3) One N.C.O. with four men (patrol ahead) towards Pont-à-Chaussy.—

(4) One Corporal with three men towards V<sup>u</sup>andoncourt, to watch the Varize bridge and the uplands south of V<sup>u</sup>andoncourt.—They will also reconnoitre the south-eastern fringe of the Varize forest, and remain in observation till 11 a.m.

These detachments represent somewhere about one troop; but as the major part of the squadron has rejoined at F<sup>o</sup>auligny, there are still two troops at the disposal of the Squadron Leader. . . .

The forward march of the squadron is therefore a series of bounds, with a periodical despatch of patrols with clearly defined objectives, relatively close together, and distinctly explained.—These

missions should be accurate both as regards distance and time.

The main body of the squadron, forming a reserve for the patrols, is retained in the hands of the Squadron Leader.—He should use this reserve to search special points, as, for instance, the woods on both sides of the road between Bionville and Courcelles,—or else to verify information.—The main body (composed at most of two troops) may on occasion carry out a tactical duty by holding a point of vantage until the arrival of the infantry. The Squadron Leader naturally will allow no favourable opportunity to slip. He must be careful, however, to remember that it is not his duty to fight, but that it is his duty, beyond everything else, to give warning to and to cover his infantry.—To carry this out he will not hesitate, if necessary, to disperse his entire command.—CAPITAINE LOIR : *Cavalerie*.

# ESTABLISHMENT OF FRENCH CAVALRY REGIMENTS.

	Officers.	N.C.O's and Men.	Saddle Horses.	Pack Animals.
REGIMENTAL STAFF :				
Colonel ... ..	1	—	3	—
Lieut.-Colonel ...	1	—	2	—
Majors ... ..	2	—	4	—
Field Officer (including administration) ...	1	—	2	—
Adjutant (Capitaine In- structeur) ... ..	1	—	2	—
Paymasters (Captain and Lieutenant) ...	2	—	—	—
Subaltern for colours...	1	—	1	—
Medical Officers ...	2	—	2	—
Veterinary Officers ...	3	—	3	—
“Petit État Major” (two Sergeant-Majors, Bag- gage Master, Sergeant Trumpeter, Corporal Trumpeter)	—	5	5	—
Non-effective Troop (in- cluding armourer, clerks, fencing instruc- tor, drivers, etc.)	—	31	—	7



	Officers.	N.C.O's and Men.	Saddle Horses.	Pack Animals.
SQUADRON :*				
Captain Commanding...	1	—	2	—
Captain (second in com- mand) ... ..	1	—	2	—
Lieutenants ... ..	2	—	2	—
Second Lieutenants ...	2	—	2	—
Squadron Sergeant- Major ... ..	—	1	1	—
Sergeants ... ..	—	5	6	—
Quartermaster-Ser- geant ... ..	—	1	1	—
Quartermaster-Corporal	—	1	1	—
Corporals ... ..	—	12	12	—
Farrier-Corporal ..	—	1	1	—
Farriers ... ..	—	2	2	—
Trumpeters ... ..	—	4	4	—
Rank and file ... ..	—	122	105	—

\* In peace there are five squadrons ; in war the fifth squadron does not accompany the regiment, but forms a depôt squadron.

The strength of a squadron in war will probably amount to 160 rank and file.

## MEASURES.

Kilometres.	Metres.	Yards.	Furlongs.	Miles.*
8 =	8,000 =	—	—	5
2 =	2,000 =	2,200 =	10 =	$1\frac{1}{4}$
—	1,600 =	1,760 =	8 =	1
—	1,000 =	1,100 =	5	
—	800 =	880 =	—	$\frac{1}{2}$
—	500 =	550		
—	400 =	440 =	—	$\frac{1}{4}$
—	250 =	275		
—	200 =	220 =	1	
—	100 =	110 =	$\frac{1}{2}$	
—	50 =	55 =	$\frac{1}{4}$	

\* To reduce miles to kilometres, multiply by ~~five~~ and divide by ~~eight~~.  
*five.* *eight*







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